SATURDAY
February 28, 2026

BENGALURU
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Judicial officers will remain objective: SC

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A TROUBLED STRETCH

A double murder in 'Mini Russia'

The killings reopen questions over foreigners' deaths in Goa

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STUNNING WIN

Jacks, Rehan pull off a heist for England

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DKS loyalists hold dinner meeting to lobby his case

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

Amid continued speculation over a possible leadership change in the ruling Congress in Karnataka, loyalists of Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar gathered at a hotel to discuss strategies to promote their leader to the Chief Minister's post.

A group of MLAs loyal to Mr. Shivakumar organised the meeting at a private hotel on Thursday night to deliberate on ways to end the ongoing confusion surrounding the alleged power-sharing pact that was believed to have been reached during the formation of the government in May 2023.

About 30 like-minded MLAs reportedly attended the meeting and decided to lobby for Mr. Shivakumar's elevation as Chief Minister. MLAs C.P. Yogeshwar, H.D. Ranganath, Ganesh Hukkeri, Mantar Gowda, and Nayana Motamma, among others, attended.

One more round of meetings of Mr. Shivakumar's loyalists is likely to be held in Bengaluru before the Budget Session of the Karnataka Legislature, which will begin on March 6.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, MLA Ranganath, a relative of Mr. Shivakumar, said issues related to the budget, the MLAs' aspirations to become ministers, and the issue of leadership change were discussed during the dinner meeting.

H.C. Balakrishna, a staunch loyalist of the KPCC chief, said his birthday falls on Saturday.

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'DON'T GO TO DELHI'
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Kejriwal, 22 others walk free in excise policy case

Court orders inquiry into 'erring investigating officer' for framing accused in absence of material evidence; it says probe was a 'premeditated, choreographed' exercise; CBI to appeal in High Court

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia address the media after a court discharged them in the Delhi excise policy case on Friday. PTI

In a major victory for the Aam Aadmi Party, a special court on Friday discharged party chief and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, his deputy Manish Sisodia, and 21 others in the politically charged liquor policy case. Mr. Kejriwal hailed the order and hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP for orchestrating what he called the "biggest political conspiracy in Independent India".

Closing the Central Bureau of Investigation's lawsuit, Special Judge Jitendra Singh of the Rouse Avenue Court observed that the case relied on hearsay evidence, had major procedural lapses, and violated constitutional principles. In its order, the court also directed a departmental inquiry against the "erring investigating officer" who framed charges against the accused in the absence of material evidence.

Former Bharat Rashtra Samithi MP K. Kavitha was also among those discharged by the court.

The court termed the probe a "premeditated and choreographed exercise", wherein roles appear to have been retrospectively assigned to suit a preconceived narrative. "What is particularly disturbing is the disregard shown by the investigating officer to the fact that public servants, who were discharging their official duties on a day-to-day basis for the effective implementation of a governmental policy, have been subjected to criminal prosecution solely on the basis of inadmissible hearsay attributed to an approver, despite the investigation yielding no material against them," the court said.

The CBI has decided to appeal the judgment in the High Court immediately, saying that several aspects of its investigation have either been ignored or not considered adequately.

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Pak. bombs Kabul, declares 'open war'

Taliban soldiers sit beside an anti-aircraft gun while keeping watch for Pakistan's fighter jets in Khost province, Afghanistan. REUTERS

Agence France-Presse
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan bombed major cities in Afghanistan, including the capital Kabul, on Friday, with Islamabad's Defence Minister declaring the neighbours at "open war" following months of tit-for-tat clashes.

Pakistan's latest operation came after Afghan forces attacked Pakistani border troops on Thursday night in retaliation for earlier air strikes by Islamabad.

Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said Afghan forces killed 55 Pakistani soldiers and captured several others, while putting the death toll among Afghan troops at 13. The head of the Pakistan military's publicity wing, Lieutenant-General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, told reporters "274 Taliban regime members and terrorists" had been killed, for the loss of 12 Pakistani troops.

Casualty claims from both sides are difficult to verify independently.

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NEARBY

State launches action plan on snakebite

BENGALURU
The government Published the State Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming to tackle snakebite cases.
» PAGE 8

II PU exam begins today

BENGALURU
The first annual examination for II PUC students will be held from February 28 to March 17, at 1,217 examination centres in the State. This year, 7,10,363 students have enrolled for the exam. » PAGE 2

PROPERTYPLUS » PAGES 5, 7 & 9

City may get another short tunnel at Goraguntepalya

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

The Goraguntepalya junction serves as a key gateway connecting Bengaluru to more than 20 districts. K. MURALI KUMAR

Even before the political and public uproar over the proposed tunnel road project from Hebbal to Central Silk Board has settled, another short tunnel is now being explored, this time at the city's heavily congested Goraguntepalya Junction on Tumakuru Road.

The project was proposed during a recent meeting where Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Urban Development Minister, D.K. Shivakumar reviewed infrastructure plans and discussed the upcoming projects with the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials.

Feasibility study

Officials told *The Hindu* that they have already initiated a feasibility study to assess what kind of structure would work at the junction and whether there is enough space to build it. "A survey will be conducted following the feasibility study. Once it the study is completed, the project is likely to be included in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) corporation level budget," a senior corporation official said.

This corridor is already layered with multiple infrastructure plans. The junction sits at the intersection of Tumakuru Road and the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and handles traffic flowing in from Mangaluru-Bengaluru and Pune-Bengaluru highway corridors, Hebbal, Yeshwantpur and the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI) signal. It serves as a key gateway connecting Bengaluru to more than 20 districts.

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New GDP series upgrades FY26 growth to 7.6% in second advance estimates

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India's economic growth is expected to touch 7.6% in the current financial year 2025-26, showed the second advance estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) based on the new and updated series released by the government on Friday. This is faster than the 7.4% predicted in the first advance estimates for 2025-26 released in January, which was based on the older series.

The new series of data, released by Statistics Secretary Saurabh Garg and Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran, has incorporated several improvements, including an updated base year of 2022-23 from the earlier 2011-12, as well as several new data sets to improve the representativeness and granularity of the data.

The series has revised downward the growth for 2023-24 to 7.2% from the 9.2% estimated in the old series and has revised upward the growth for 2024-25 to 7.1% from the earlier estimate of 6.5%.

According to the data, India's nominal GDP – which is essentially the size of the economy – has been revised downward for the three years spanning 2023-26, which will have a negative impact on several fiscal ratios pegged to these numbers, such as the fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio and the debt-to-GDP ratio.

CONTINUED ON
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Stronger outlook

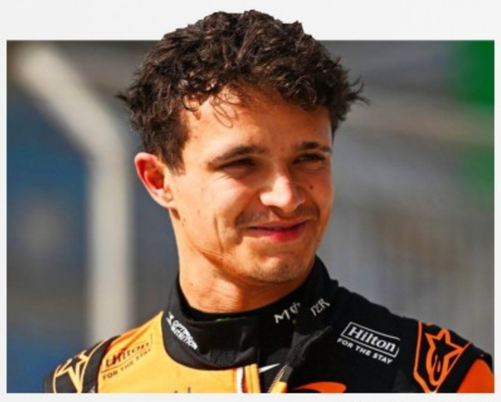
The second advance estimates peg India's economic growth at 7.6% in FY26, higher than the first estimates made in January

The bars show annual GDP estimates (in lakh crore). Growth rates at constant prices (in %) is mentioned inside the circles

FRE: FIRST REVISED ESTIMATES
SAE: SECOND ADVANCE ESTIMATES

F1's radical new era: leaner and cleaner, sure; but meaner?

Motor-racing's most prestigious championship takes a brave step into the unknown in 2026. Sweeping changes to both the engine and chassis mean the cars will be unlike anything seen before. They will be smaller, nimbler and more eco-friendly than last year, but will they race better? Here is everything you need to know ahead of next weekend's season opener



LANDO NORRIS

S. Dipak Ragav

'What we know is a drop, what we don't know is an ocean'. It is one of the most profound sayings, delineating the limits of human knowledge. While it might be reductive to use it in the context of a professional sport where cars go around a circuit for 90 minutes, it perfectly encapsulates Formula One in 2026.

One of the biggest concerns about the new engine regulations is that the cars will be energy-starved, leading drivers to be very conservative

The 77th running of motor-racing's most prestigious championship features a radical overhaul of technical regulations on both the engine and chassis fronts. Although the first three pre-season tests – one in Barcelona and two in Bahrain – have offered a glimpse of what to expect, for the first time in recent memory, everyone, from teams to fans, is entering the season with several unanswered questions.

The Hindu examines the main talking points in a primer for F1's new era.

What's new?

Well, a lot, to be honest! First and foremost, there is a big change in the heart of F1 – that is, the engines. Since 2014, F1 has embraced hybrid technology to make the engines more eco-friendly. The 2014 rules introduced a 1.6-litre V6 turbo-hybrid engine with an electric component of 120 kW. For 2026, that has increased threefold to 350 kW, and 50% of the car's power will come from an electric source. This will be produced by the MGU-K component, which harvests energy from braking to recharge the battery.

Reading the tea leaves from the nine days of pre-season testing, it appears the two major works teams, Mercedes and Ferrari, have set the early benchmark

MAX VERSTAPPEN

The increased electrification is part of the sport's ambitious target to become net-zero carbon by 2030 and also attract new engine manufacturers. Under the previous regulations, Mercedes, Ferrari, Honda and Renault supplied engines, and the first three are continuing. Audi and Red Bull Powertrains are the two new entrants.

Apart from 50% electric power (more likely to be 40-45%), the power unit will use advanced sustainable fuels derived from carbon capture, municipal waste, and non-food biomass, rather than crude oil.

Slim in race trim

Apart from the major engine changes, the cars will look visually different this year. For starters, they are smaller, making them nimbler and more like proper single-seater racing cars than the wide, long ones we have been used to since 2017. Wheelbase, width, weight, tyre size – everything has been trimmed to various degrees. A maxim of racing cars is that smaller and lighter means faster.

The ground-effect cars from 2022 to 2025 have been discontinued. These cars generated most of their downforce from the underbody, but had other limitations and physically hurt drivers because they tended to bounce a lot on straights.

Goodbye DRS. Hello active aerodynamics

The 2026 generation of cars features active aerodynamics, with movable front and rear wings. Since 2011, F1 has used DRS (Drag Reduction System) as an overtaking aid, allowing drivers to open only the rear wing flap to reduce drag and increase straight-line speed in a designated part of the track only when they are within one second of the car ahead.

CHARLES LECLERC

From 2026, drivers will be able to switch from cornering mode to straight-line mode in specific activation zones. In cornering mode, the wings are in the normal state for maximum downforce. In straight-line mode, the drivers open the flaps to reduce drag and downforce, increasing speed.

Are there other overtaking aids?

Yes, drivers can activate overtake mode when they are following within one second of a car before the detection point (nominally the final corner). This allows them to recharge additional energy, which can be deployed on the subsequent lap, either all at once or spread over the lap.

What does the competitive order look like?

Reading the tea leaves from the nine days of testing, it appears the two major works teams, Mercedes and Ferrari, have set the early benchmark. Considering that the two outfits build both the engine and the chassis in-house, they have an edge in integrating the two and understanding how to harvest and deploy energy.

Mercedes came out of the blocks strongly in Barcelona, running reliably and setting some impressive times. The widespread belief is that Mercedes, as it did in 2014, might have the strongest engine package.

Ferrari has also grabbed the limelight, topping the timings in Barcelona and in the final test in Bahrain. The scarlet car, especially in the hands of Charles Leclerc, could start as Mercedes' closest rival, come Melbourne. The team debuted an innovative movable rear wing that could bring valuable gains. The only caveat to Ferrari's pace is that it has won many a 'testing championship' in recent times, only for that to prove to be a mirage once the season begins. For the tifosi and the sport, one hopes the Italian marque can fulfil the promise shown in testing.

GEORGE RUSSELL

What about the others?

Reigning champion McLaren gradually improved through testing, but might not start favourite. How quickly it gets to grips with the Mercedes engine's energy management will define its fortunes.

Similarly, Red Bull, building its own engine for the first time, has looked quick on a few occasions, but it remains to be seen whether it will immediately be a contender.

Still, for a newcomer, Red Bull Powertrain has hit the ground running – a creditable achievement. Mercedes boss Toto Wolff even reckoned Red Bull has the best energy deployment on the straights.

In contrast, Audi, one team F1 rule-makers drew to the sport by tweaking the engine formula, has had a more chastening initiation and is probably in the middle of midfield.

The one team severely on the backfoot is Aston Martin, powered by Honda. The Japanese major's power unit has had several gremlins, and by the final test day, it ran out of spare parts, forcing the Silverstone-based squad to curtail running. The Honda engine appears underpowered and unreliable.

The car, designed by Adrian Newey, looks radically different and could be aerodynamically efficient and class-leading. But that won't matter unless the engine issues are resolved.

How exciting will the races be?

That is the big unknown. The smaller cars, in theory, should make wheel-to-wheel racing slightly better, but there is significant uncertainty about energy management.

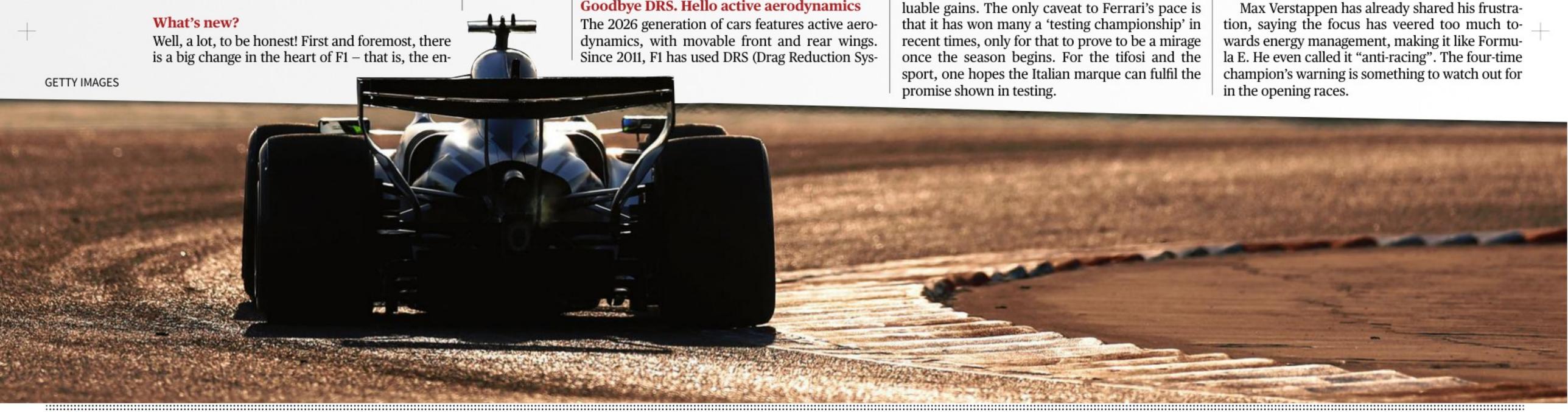
Each power unit has its own way of harvesting energy, and the drivers have already reported that they had to unlearn years of driving style to adapt to these cars' requirements.

One of the biggest concerns about the new engine regulations is that the cars will be energy-starved, leading drivers to be very conservative when coasting through certain parts of the track. It could become tricky, especially in races that don't have many heavy braking zones, which means less energy is recovered.

The only way to mitigate this is to recharge the battery on the straights when the driver is on full throttle. It would mean cars won't reach maximum speed, which could affect overtaking and make races less exciting.

Max Verstappen has already shared his frustration, saying the focus has veered too much towards energy management, making it like Formula E. He even called it "anti-racing". The four-time champion's warning is something to watch out for in the opening races.

GETTY IMAGES



STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Carlos Alcaraz	22	13,550	18
2	Jannik Sinner	24	10,400	19
3	Novak Djokovic	38	5,280	18
4	Alexander Zverev	28	4,555	22
5	Lorenzo Musetti	23	4,405	22
6	Alex de Minaur	27	4,235	22
7	Taylor Fritz	28	4,220	23
8	Felix Auger-Aliassime	25	4,080	26
9	Ben Shelton	23	4,050	23
10	Alexander Bublik	28	3,405	26
11	Daniil Medvedev	30	2,960	24
12	Casper Ruud	27	2,665	22
13	Jakub Mensik	20	2,595	23
14	A. Davidovich Fokina	26	2,470	25
15	Jack Draper	24	2,460	16

Top Indians ▶

Sumit Nagal
Rank 286 ▲ 11 spots

Aryan Shah
Rank 409 ▲ 2 spots

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	27	10,675	20
2	Iga Swiatek	24	7,588	20
3	Elena Rybakina	26	7,253	22
4	Coco Gauff	21	6,803	20
5	Jessica Pegula	31	6,768	23
6	Amanda Anisimova	24	6,070	21
7	Jasmine Paolini	30	4,047	19
8	Mirra Andreeva	18	4,001	20
9	Elina Svitolina	31	3,845	16
10	Victoria Mboko	19	3,214	23
11	Ekaterina Alexandrova	31	2,918	26
12	Belinda Bencic	28	2,898	19
13	Karolina Muchova	29	2,668	16
14	Linda Noskova	21	2,421	23
15	Madison Keys	31	2,351	19

Top Indians ▶

Sahaja Yamalapalli
Rank 397 ▲ 19 spots

Vaishnavi Adkar
Rank 466 ▲ 224 spots

English Premier League Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Arsenal	28	18	7	3	56	21	35	61
2	Man. City	27	17	5	5	56	25	31	56
3	Aston Villa	27	15	6	6	38	28	10	51
4	Man. United	27	13	9	5	48	37	11	48
5	Chelsea	27	12	9	6	48	31	17	45
6	Liverpool	27	13	6	8	42	35	7	45
7	Brentford	27	12	4	11	40	37	3	40
8	Bournemouth	27	9	11	7	43	45	-2	38
9	Everton	27	10	7	10	29	31	-2	37
10	Fulham	27	11	4	12	38	41	-3	37
11	Newcastle	27	10	6	11	38	39	-1	36
12	Sunderland	27	9	9	9	28	33	-5	36
13	Crystal Palace	27	9	8	10	29	32	-3	35
14	Brighton	27	8	10	9	36	34	2	34
15	Leeds United	27	7	10	10	37	46	-9	31
16	Tottenham	27	7	8	12	37	41	-4	29
17	N. Forest	27	7	6	14	25	39	-14	27
18	West Ham	27	6	7	14	32	49	-17	25
19	Burnley	27	4	7	16	29	52	-23	19
20	Wolves	28	1	7	20	18	51	-33	10

Italian Serie A Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Inter Milan	26	21	1	4	62	21	41	64
2	AC Milan	26	15	9	2	41	20	21	54
3	Napoli	26	15	5	6	39	27	12	50
4	Roma	26	16	2	8	34	16	18	50
5	Juventus	26	13	7	6	43	25	18	46
6	Como	26	12	9	5	41	19	22	45
7	Atalanta	26	12	9	5	36	22	14	45
8	Bologna	26	10	6	10	35	32	3	36
9	Sassuolo	26	10	5	11	32	35	-3	35
10	Lazio	26	8	10	8	26	25	1	34
11	Udinese	26	9	5	12	28	39	-11	32
12	Parma	26	8	8	10	19	31	-12	32
13	Cagliari	26	7	8	11	28	35	-7	29
14	Genoa	26	6	9	11	32	37	-5	27
15	Torino	26	7	6	13	25	47	-22	27
16	Fiorentina	26	5	9	12	30	39	-9	24
17	Cremonese	26	5	9	12	21	36	-15	24
18	Lecce	26	6	6	14	17	33	-16	24
19	Pisa	26	1	12	13	20	43	-23	15
20	Verona	26	2	9	15	19	46	-27	15

Spanish LaLiga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Barcelona	25	20	1	4	67	25	42	61
2	Real Madrid	25	19	3	3	54	21	33	60
3	Villarreal	25	16	3	6	47	27	20	51
4	Atletico Madrid	25	14	6	5	42	23	19	48
5	Real Betis	25	11	9	5	40	30	10	42
6	Celta Vigo	25	9	10	6	34	27	7	37
7	Espanyol	25	10	5	10	31	37	-6	35
8	Athletic Club	25	10	4	11	29	35	-6	34
9	Osasuna	25	9	6	10	30	29	1	33
10	Real Sociedad	25	8	8	9	37	38	-1	32
11	Girona	25	7	9	9	26	40	-14	30
12	Sevilla	25	8	5	12	32	39	-7	29
13	Getafe	25	8	5	12	20	29	-9	29
14	Alaves	25	7	6	12	23	32	-9	27
15	Rayo Vallecano	24	6	8	10	22	31	-9	26
16	Valencia	25	6	8	11	26	39	-13	26
17	Elche	25	5	10	10	32	37	-5	25
18	Real Mallorca	25	6	6	13	29	41	-12	24
19	Levante	25	4	6	15	26	44	-18	18
20	Real Oviedo	24	3	8	13	16	39	-23	17

German Bundesliga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Bayern	23	19	3	1	85	21	64	60
2	Dortmund	23	15	7	1	49	22	27	52
3	Hoffenheim	23	14	4	5	49	30	19	46
4	Stuttgart	23	13	4	6	44	32	12	43
5	RB Leipzig	23	12	5	6	44	32	12	41
6	Leverkusen	22	12	3	7	43	28	15	39
7	SC Freiburg	23	9	6	8	34	37	-3	33
8	E. Frankfurt	23	8	7	8	46	49	-3	31
9	Union Berlin	23	7	7	9	29	37	-8	28
10	FC Augsburg	23	8	4	11	28	41	-13	28
11	Hamburg	22	6	8	8	25	32	-7	26
12	Cologne	23	6	6	11	33	39	-6	24
13	Mainz	23	5	7	11	26	38	-12	22
14	M'gladbach	23	5	7	11	26	39	-13	22
15	Wolfsburg	23	5	5	13	33	49	-16	20
16	St Pauli	23	5	5	13	22	40	-18	20
17	Werder	23	4	7	12	23	44	-21	19
18	Heidenheim	23	3	5	15	22	51	-29	14

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Joe Root	880	932
2	Harry Brook	857	898
3	Travis Head	853	884
4	Steve Smith	831	947
5	Kane Williamson	822	919
6	Kamindu Mendis	781	784
7	Temba Bavuma	775	806
8	Yashasvi Jaiswal	750	858
9	Saud Shakeel	734	787
10	Shubman Gill	730	807

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	879	908
2	Noman Ali	843	853
3	Mitchell Starc	838	852
4	Matt Henry	836	853
5	Pat Cummins	832	914
6	Marco Jansen	825	825
7	Scott Boland	820	820
8	Kagiso Rabada	807	902
9	Josh Hazlewood	775	864
10	Nathan Lyon	753	812

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Daryl Mitchell	845	845
2	Virat Kohli	795	909
3	Ibrahim Zadran	764	764
4	Rohit Sharma	757	882
5	Shubman Gill	723	847
6	Babar Azam	722	898
7	Harry Tector	708	767
8	Shai Hope	701	802
9	Charith Asalanka	672	725
10	K.L. Rahul	670	683

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	710	799
2	Jofra Archer	650	683
3	Keshav Maharaj	646	741
4	Bernard Scholtz	645	648
5	Adil Rashid	632	675
6	Josh Hazlewood	628	727
6	Maheesh Theekshana	628	686
8	Kuldeep Yadav	625	761
9	Abrar Ahmed	624	630
10	Mitchell Santner	617	657

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Abhishek Sharma	877	931
2	Phil Salt	815	881
3	Sahibzada Farhan	810	810
4	Pathum Nissanka	789	796
5	Ishan Kishan	742	765
6	Suryakumar Yadav	740	912
7	Tilak Varma	730	845
8	Jos Buttler	725	794
9	Dewald Brevis	724	724
10	Tim Seifert	715	740

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Varun Chakaravarthy	790	818
2	Rashid Khan	753	828
3	Corbin Bosch	731	731
4	Adil Rashid	716	747
5	Abrar Ahmed	712	757
6	Adam Zampa	682	746
7	Matthew Forde	679	679
8	Jasprit Bumrah	669	783
9	Mustafizur Rahman	665	718
10	Wanindu Hasaranga	664	809

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PG medical: Round 4 starts

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The seat allotment process for the fourth round of admission to PG medical courses commenced on Friday. Candidates can submit their applications by March 3, said Islavuddeen Gadyal, executive director of Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA).

Those who have submitted applications must visit KEA on March 2 and 3 and submit original documents. Candidates who wish to participate in the fourth round must pay a caution deposit of ₹7 lakh between March 2 and 4, and will be allowed to enter their options from March 4 to 6. The provisional result will be announced on March 6. The final result will be published on March 7.

Those allotted seats must pay the fees and download their admission letters between March 9 and 11, and report to their colleges by March 12.

Only those who have not been allotted seats are eligible to participate in this round. Candidates allotted seats in the third round must pay the fees and secure admission in their colleges by March 4. If they fail to take admission, their seats will be considered for the fourth round. Counselling will be conducted for 817 PG medical seats and 17 DNB seats that remained unallotted in the third round.

The final results of the second round of seat allotment for M.Pharm admissions have been announced. Candidates are instructed to pay the fees and report to their colleges by March 3.

State to support AVGC-XR ecosystem to focus on original IP creation

With the potential to create 20 lakh jobs in the next five years, this sector can create employment across fields, says CM

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

Visitors exploring a sensor-based drone handling experiment during GAFX 2026 at Lalit Ashok in Bengaluru on Wednesday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Karnataka clearly seems to be ahead of the rest of India in its effort to transform its AVGC-XR (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics-Extended Reality) sector, part of the orange economy, from a predominantly service-led model to one driven by original intellectual property (IP) creation.

The State is a significant leader in the AVGC-XR space as it was one of the pioneers in identifying the economic and employment potential of the sector. It followed this up with an AVGC policy, the country's first, over a decade ago itself.

Priyank Kharge, Minister for Electronics and IT, chaired a high-level consultation meeting with industry leaders at the GIA (Global Innovation Alliance) International Roundtable on the sidelines of the Bengaluru GAFX (Games, Animation and Visual Effects) 2026 on Friday here. The close-door meeting, attended by GIA partners, global studios, gaming companies, academic institutions, investors and other ecosystem players, witnessed deliberations on strengthening IP ownership, global storytelling, technology integration, and market access.

Skilling and employability was one of the key issues discussed. Participants agreed that the shift to IP leadership must be anchored in strong, industry-validated skilling frameworks.

The Minister also invited employment-oriented curriculum proposals under Karnataka's emerging technology upskilling programmes, extending them to AVGC-XR.

The participants also discussed preparing the ecosystem for AI-driven transformation, ensuring regulatory clarity, intellectual property safeguards and proactive policy support while leveraging multilingual AI and immersive technologies.

Global partners also shared insights on co-production treaties, incentive structures, and start up exchange models. Mr. Kharge committed to expanding the GIA to integrate AVGC-XR and gaming more actively, including structured co-production forums and soft-landing pathways.

Participants underscored the need for stronger publishing, distribution, and global discoverability mechanisms for Indian IP. To address this, the State invited stakeholders to collaborate to bring a comprehensive roadmap for IP creation across animation, gaming, XR technologies, and AI-enabled tools.

On the gaming and eSports front, the industry experts discussed strategies to strengthen Karnataka's gaming ecosystem, including institutionalising an annual eGaming Summit and expanding Centres of Excellence to support animation, gaming, and immersive technology R&D.

Over 2,000 students from over 25 colleges across the country are participating at GAFX 2026, which will conclude on March 1.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said that the State government is committed to supporting the growth of this sector with all policies and incentives required.

Bengaluru is not merely India's technology capital but a city where imagination meets engineering, where art meets algorithms, and where creativity finds capital, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah stated after inaugurating GAFX 2026.

From software to space research and biotech to deep-tech, Bengaluru has always been at the frontier of revolutions, he pointed out. "Today, GAFX represents the next great frontier. The Games, Animation and Visual Effects sector is no longer a small creative industry. In the era of digital revolution, immersive media, streaming platforms, e-sports, and extended reality, GAFX is shaping how humanity experiences stories, culture, education and even governance," the Chief Minister said while addressing a packed audience of industry players, AVGC-XR experts, and students.

This edition signals that Karnataka is not just participating in this revolution but leading it, he noted.

"Karnataka's commitment to the AVGC-XR sector is not recent or reactive. We have been pioneers," he claimed, elaborating that in 2017, Karnataka became the first State in India to implement a dedicated AVGC policy. "That decision was driven by foresight, recognising that content creation would become as powerful as code creation."

According to Mr. Siddaramaiah, Karnataka is currently implementing its third AVGC-XR Policy for the period 2024-29, reflecting not only continuity in governance but also a sustained commitment to strengthening this sector. "Our AVGC-XR policy has provided incentives, infrastructure support, skill-building initiatives, incubation systems, and institutional collaboration to nurture this ecosystem," he informed the audience.

With the potential to create 20 lakh jobs in the next five years, this sector can generate employment across design, coding, storytelling, music, motion capture, AI modelling and production management, apart from integrating art, mathematics, psychology and technology, Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

From Page One

City may get another short tunnel

Moreover, a large number of heavy motor vehicles use this stretch daily, adding to the congestion burden.

The stretch falls under the limits of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). "If the short tunnel proposal is found technically and financially viable, the government will then decide whether the project will be executed by the NHAI or taken up by the Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited, a government-owned special purpose vehicle established to execute large-scale infrastructure projects," an official from the West City Corporation said.

However, the proposed tunnel at Goraguntepalya may face design challenges, as it lies along a corridor where Namma Metro Phase 3 plans an integrated double-decker structure carrying both metro and road traffic, the official said, adding that the West Corporation have sought detailed drawings from BMRCL to understand the exact alignment of the proposed elevated metro line, including the location of pillars and decks. The tunnel proposal will be examined only after studying these plans to ensure there is no structural conflict and that sufficient space is available.

Groundwork has begun to assess land availability along the corridor. Officials are examining how many properties from Goraguntepalya towards the adjacent signal on the left side have already been relinquished. Where land has not been relinquished, Transferable Development Rights will be required to be granted.

16 held in drive against drugs

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In separate cases, the Bengaluru police have arrested 16 people, including nine foreign nationals, for allegedly engaging in drug peddling and sourcing.

The raids resulted in the seizure of 3,000 MDMA ecstasy pills, 230 gm of MDMA crystals, 48 kg of ganja, and 306 gm of hydroganja. The estimated value of the contraband is ₹5.24 crore, according to a statement issued by the Bengaluru City Police.

Seemant Kumar Singh, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner, said that all the foreign nationals have been handed over to the Foreigners Regional Registration Office. Seven of them were remanded to a detention centre owing to pending cases against them, while the remaining two have been deported to their respective countries.

II PU annual examinations begin today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Staff members marking hall ticket numbers at Seshadripuram Pre-University College in Bengaluru on Friday, as part of preparations for the II PU examination. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

The first annual examination for II PU students will be held from February 28 to March 17, at 1,217 examination centres across the State. On Saturday, Kannada and Arabic exams will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This year, a total of 7,10,363 students from 5,174 PU colleges have enrolled for the exam. A total of 2,92,645 students have enrolled for Science stream, 2,11,174 for Commerce and 1,42,982 students for Arts.

To curb malpractices, the Karnataka State Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) will be web-streaming all the examination processes.

All types of electronic devices, including phones, smart watches, earphones are prohibited.

Alerted by incidents of miscreants leaking question papers on social media during the preparatory examination a few days ago, the KSEAB has taken steps to conduct the exam with elaborate security arrangements this year. It has instructed the police officials to monitor WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and other social media platforms.

The use of phones is prohibited for officers and staff involved in security work and examination duty at centres. Only the superintendent of the examination centre will be allowed to use basic phones without camera facility. The KSEAB directed students to follow the dress code prescribed by the educational institutions and the directions of the Supreme Court.

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation and other corporations will provide free bus service for the students, and they can travel free of cost by showing their ID cards and admission cards.

If students undergo any exam-related stress, they can contact KSEAB's helpline by dialling 080-23310075/76.

BU to extend village adoption to all departments

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Bangalore University Law College, in association with the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, conducting a legal awareness and literacy programme in Tumakuru district. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Bangalore University has made the 'Village Adoption' programme mandatory for all its departments. The measure comes after the successful implementation of the 'Legal Awareness and Literacy' programme by the University Law College through village adoption.

There are about 42 departments in Bangalore University, including Kannada, English, and performing arts, and the university has asked all these departments to adopt at least two villages.

In the first phase, University Law College, in association with the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, conducted a comprehensive Legal Awareness and Literacy Programme at Biddanagere village in Kunigal taluk of Tumakuru district.

As part of this initiative, final-year law students undertook an extensive field survey in the village to assess the legal and documentation-related issues faced by rural residents. The survey focused on identifying concerns such as pending disputes and cases, lack of Aadhaar-related documentation, and difficulties in accessing the government officials concerned.

"During the interaction with villagers, students observed that many people were unaware of the importance of essential government documents such as driving licences, vehicle insurance, birth certificates, and death certificates. The absence of these key documents has resulted in several families being deprived of various government welfare schemes and benefits. The students provided guidance on the procedures to obtain these documents and informed the public about the availability of free legal assistance through the Taluk Legal Services Committee and the District Legal Services Authority," said Meghana Manoj, a final-year law student at the university. In the second phase, thematic group discussions were organised on important legal topics, including laws relating to victim protection, prevention of child marriage, and women's property rights. Awareness was also created about the Digital Sakhi programme, which aims to enhance digital literacy and empower women at the grassroots level.

.Jayakara S.M., Vice-Chancellor of Bangalore University, said, "Our law college has already adopted two villages in Tumakuru district and made the legal awareness and assistance programme a great success. The villagers have also expressed their happiness over this."

Belgium hockey's golden boys still want everything the sport has to offer

Arthur Van Doren

GETTY IMAGES

Arthur Van Doren and Alexander Hendrickx have a trophy cabinet filled with the game's top honours, but aren't satisfied. In their 30s, they remain an important part of the Red Lions' plans of reclaiming their dominance. They hope to cap a decade-long partnership by winning the World Cup at home later this year and Olympic gold at LA28

Uthra Ganesan

They first came calling together more than a decade ago, as kids finding their way in top-grade hockey – a world removed from being legends of the game. Cue 2026 and Alexander Hendrickx and Arthur Van Doren have a trophy cabinet overflowing with everything that is to be won in the sport.

They are still as exuberant, excited and enthusiastic as teenagers having their moment in the sun, old warhorses of the Belgium team that fake offence at 'old', laugh at their own jokes and complete each other's sentences. They might be on the wrong side of 30, when teams start looking at replacements, but remain key to the Red Lions' plans of reclaiming their dominance.

Down years

The last couple of years haven't been great vis-a-vis their own high standards. Belgium failed to make the semifinals at both the Paris Olympics and the 2025 European Championships, and the two are among the very few to continue, accepting both revised roles in the side and the challenge of keeping pace with the newcomers.

Hendrickx and Van Doren, the defender duo that first visited India for the 2013 Junior World Cup, spent almost two months in the country before heading home after the Pro League games in Rourkela. During this period, they won the Hockey India League with Vedanta Kalinga Lancers and remained unbeaten in the four Pro League outings, Hendrickx going second on the goalscorers' table with nine so far in eight matches.

"The longest we've been on the road was at the beginning of the Pro League season, about five weeks, in different countries. I think we toured the whole world in those five weeks. Now we have been seven weeks in one country. And it always helps if you're winning; then you feel better about it and you're happier to be anywhere," Hendrickx – at 32 a year older, but you wouldn't know it from their demeanours – quipped.

> Everything you do in and around the hockey field is for that part on the hockey field to be perfect... the quality you bring on field with your stick, that's important. But it goes way further than only that
>
> ARTHUR VAN DOREN

Van Doren, the captain and the more serious one, agreed. "It's been good. Obviously, we had a great HIL, which also helps. We've played well, we won the HIL, we look back at that period with fond memories, of course. The advantage is that compared to last year, we did four different cities, which sort of cut the stay into parts. Also the transition between international duty and HIL also sort of broke it a little bit. But it's been a long stay away from family and friends and I don't think it is weird when I say I will be happy to finally be flying back to Belgium."

It's difficult to not be drawn in by the charismatic pair. As intense as they are on field, there is a playfulness off it that gives a glimpse of why they continue to enjoy what they do. The camaraderie off the field – not just between the two but among the entire Belgian side – they admit is a big contributor to their success on it.

"If you think about it logically, the most time you spend in a tournament block is off the field. And the part on the field is actually a very small part. So everything you do in and around the hockey field is for that part on the hockey field to be perfect. It is quite important to have a good understanding, not only between two players but in the culture in general. I think it is often underestimated and it's something that needs time to build," Van Doren said.

"Which is why often newer or younger teams, on paper with enough quality, need time to build a culture and for everybody to find their own place and rhythm. I think that's one of the most crucial parts of a successful team. Obviously the quality you bring on field with your stick, that's important. But it goes way further than only hockey skills or penalty corner conversions."

Team bonding

Hendrickx elaborated: "We also have a lot of fun in the group off pitch, you're chilling at the pool together or playing card games, laughing. I think that brings everybody together as well. And you talk. You get to know each other on a personal level better, family-wise, stuff like that. You celebrate all your important moments together. All that adds to being a good team."

PHOTO: BISWARANJAN ROUT

> I think there's still some spots left in the trophy cabinet, because we want to win as long as we're playing. We want to win everything!
>
> ALEXANDER HENDRICKX

Hendrickx is chatty, but there is no doubting the constantly ticking brain and the competitiveness behind the ever-present toothy grin. The Junior World Cup is the one trophy Van Doren and he don't have, and never will, for obvious reasons, but the 2013 edition clearly laid the foundation for Belgium's rise from No. 10-to-15 in the world to the very top inside 10 years.

"We cannot go back in time, but I think we also learned a lot from that tournament, losing the quarterfinal against France. You learn from your mistakes and everything we did not do well there, we tried to do better in the future. Every step in your career helps you to get further. But I think there's still some spots left in the trophy cabinet, because we want to win as long as we're playing. We want to win everything!" Hendrickx declared as a battle cry, forcing even Van Doren to break into a laugh.

With Tom Boon (36) still making life difficult for rival teams and Hendrickx (32) and Van Doren (31) quite young in comparison and with the richness of their accomplishments, it is easy to overlook the fact that the current Belgian squad has four generations playing and training together, 2025 Junior World Cup captain Lucas Balthazar, at 20, the latest addition.

Does it feel weird? "Yes, thank you. We've covered that part, we are getting old," Van Doren protested. "We started with not too young and now it's outright old, can we talk about something else," Hendrickx added with pretend anger. But they agree that age does force you to respect your body more than ever.

Listening to the body

"You get wiser, you get more experience so you know what your body needs in what instance. You learn from injuries and your career on how to handle your body. I speak for myself, but probably Arthur as well, when I say I was not a big fan of stretching or recovery or all the stuff like that as a youngster. But once you get older you start to realise what your body needs. You take more care, go to the physio, eat and sleep well. You do everything to be as fit as possible because the youngsters, they come in with fresh legs, they can just go," Hendrickx explained, Van Doren nodding his agreement.

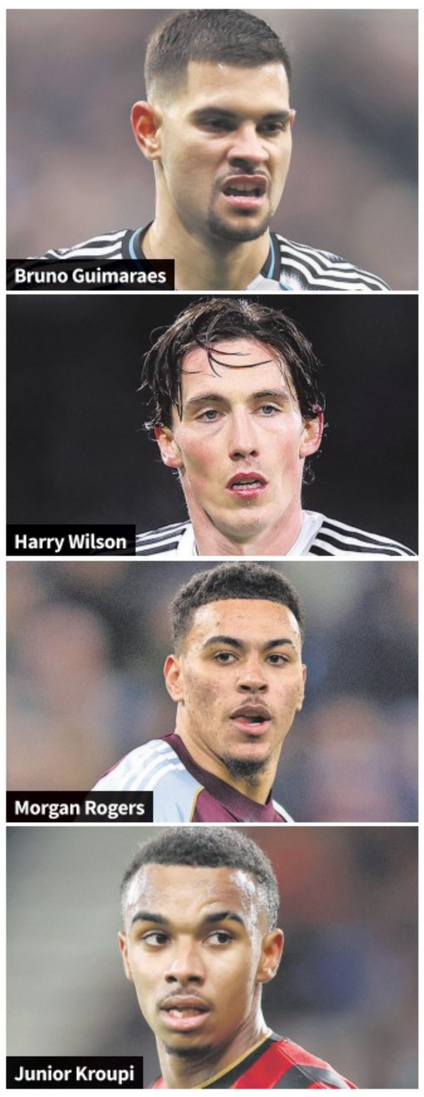
The former Olympic, World and European champions have been doing it for a long time now. And both have no plans of going anywhere at least until the 2028 Olympics. That's three more years of teams scratching their collective heads to find ways of wrong-footing Van Doren and denying Hendrickx's drag-flicks. Good news for Belgium, not so much for the rest.

GAME THEORY

Premier League: goals vs. expected goals

Erling Haaland, who leads the Premier League's goal-scoring chart so far this season, is marginally outperforming his expected goals (xG). Bruno Guimaraes, Harry Wilson, Junior Kroupi and Morgan Rogers have scored far fewer goals than the Man City centre-forward, but have all scored 3 more goals than expected, based on the shot opportunities they have had. A look at the top goal-scorers in the English top division in 2025-26 and the margin between their tallies and the xG they have generated (xGDiff):

Player	Club	Games	Goals	xG	xGDiff
Erling Haaland	Man City	27	22	21.86	0.14
Igor Thiago	Brentford	27	17	17.91	-0.91
Antoine Semenyo	Bournemouth/ Man City	26	13	10.02	2.98
Joao Pedro	Chelsea	27	11	10.47	0.53
Dominic Calvert-Lewin	Leeds	24	10	12.47	-2.47
Hugo Ekitike	Liverpool	24	10	11.28	-1.28
Viktor Gyokeres	Arsenal	26	10	9.41	0.59
Bruno Guimaraes	Newcastle	23	9	5.75	3.25
Bryan Mbeumo	Man Utd	22	9	8.82	0.18
Danny Welbeck	Brighton	26	9	9.28	-0.28
Cole Palmer	Chelsea	26	8	8.64	-0.64
Enzo Fernandez	Chelsea	26	8	9.85	-1.85
Harry Wilson	Fulham	26	8	4.29	3.71
Jarrod Bowen	West Ham	27	8	6.81	1.19
Jean-Philippe Mateta	Crystal Palace	23	8	12.49	-4.49
Junior Kroupi	Bournemouth	22	8	4.69	3.31
Morgan Rogers	Aston Villa	27	8	4.55	3.45
Ollie Watkins	Aston Villa	26	8	11.19	-3.19
Raul Jimenez	Fulham	26	8	10.25	-2.25



SOURCE: WHOSCORED.COM

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

Halo infinite

Winter sport often makes for great images.

And sometimes going just that extra mile, creatively, can produce truly spectacular results.

This mind-bending photograph, from the men's snowboard slopestyle event at the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics at Livigno Snow Park in Italy, was created with an infrared camera in combination with an on-camera filter.

The idea behind this image, captured with a mirrorless camera suitably modified, was to depict the electromagnetic spectrum beyond what is visible to the human eye. The nature of the subject helps — slopestyle, thanks to its roots in extreme sports such as skateboarding and BMX, lends itself to spectacular action.

In the discipline, competitors snowboard (or ski) down a course which has a range of obstacles.

They perform tricks — spins, grinds, grabs and flips — and are judged on amplitude (height of jumps), degree of difficulty, execution, variety, originality, flow (combinations) and style.

Slopestyle became an Olympic event, in both the skiing and snowboarding forms, at the 2014 Winter Games staged in Sochi, Russia.

SATURDAY
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Motorists irked as white-topping drags on

Adding to the misery, IRR, which runs parallel, is already congested at Sony Signal and Ejipura Junction, making commuting a Herculean task

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

Traffic moving at a slow pace at Koramangala near National Games Village in Bengaluru, as white-topping works are still on. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Residents of south-east Bengaluru heading to the city centre and beyond are greeted by clouds of dust, relentless honking, and a strong stench from the waste transfer station on Srinivagilu Main Road near National Games Village (NGV), as the white-topping work continues to drag on.

Covering the 750-metre stretch of the Srinivagilu Main Road from the Regional Passport Office in Koramangala to Ejipura Main Road takes nearly five minutes during peak hours, as the stretch has over three bottlenecks. Adding to the misery, the Intermediate Ring Road (IRR), which runs parallel, is already congested at Sony Signal and the Ejipura Junction, making commuting in the area a Herculean task.

The work was commissioned last year and was scheduled to begin in August and be completed by the first week of January this year. However, work only began in December 2025, and merely 20% was completed by January. Sources said that the deadline has been pushed to mid-April. However, the onfield progress does not seem to promise timely completion.

On the ground, the white-topping work has been completed in one direction (towards Koramangala), although patches remain unfinished. The cobblestone walkway is still in progress. On the other side, only 10% of the stretch has been completed.

Arun K., a regular commuter to M.G. Road, said, "The road width reduces near the waste transfer station as work is under way on one part of the road. At this point, vehicle movement slows down and a congestion point is created, requiring commuters to mandatorily spend about a minute there, while the smell remains persistent."

Manisha, a resident of Koramangala 4th Block, said, "Due to the Ejipura flyover works, the IRR has a congestion point at the Ejipura signal. To use Hosur Road, the Koramangala signal is congested. So, using Lower Agram Road through Srinivagilu Road is a good option, and most of us use this road."

Both argued that the road needed upgrading, as it was beyond repair or temporary fixes. Riddled with large potholes, multiple garbage black spots, and broken sewer lines, the stretch was not even suitable for walking, they said.

A senior traffic police officer explained that during the monsoon, the road turns into an off-road experience for commuters, with flooding at multiple locations. He added that upgrading the road would also address the persistent garbage black spots, as new footpaths will be built.

A civic body official said that the work has picked up pace over the last week and would be completed by April.

Two arrested for illegal arms trade; pistol, live cartridges seized

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested two persons for allegedly engaging in illegal arms trade, on February 25. The CCB seized a 0.32 mm pistol and 50 live cartridges from the accused who have been identified as Syed Masood, 26, a resident of Jayanagar, and Javed Alam, 19, a resident of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.

According to the police, Masood bought the pistol from Alam on February 25. The firearm did not have a licence.

Self-protection

Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said that CCB inspector A.K. Rakshith acted on a tip-off and gathered credible information about arms trafficking. A police source said the accused claimed to have bought the firearm for self-protection, but the police were not convinced by his explanation. Investigations had not identified any such threat.

Further probe revealed that the accused was a small-time goat trader. In addition, neither of the accused has a prior case against them.

"Despite Masood's self-protection claims, there is no corresponding evidence to support his statement, and the arms trade is illegal. We are continuing our investigation to ascertain the possible reasons for purchasing the firearm," a police officer said.

Investigators were also probing the links of Alam. The duo have been booked under the Arms Act.

HC directs GBA to restore storm-water drains encroached by developers

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has directed the Greater Bengaluru Authority (BGA) to restore storm-water drains, encroached by the developers while building Mantri Tranquil apartment complex and forming Royal Palms layout in Gubbalala, if the residents' associations and the developers failed to provide an alternative course for drain, to be laid within 15 days from Saturday.

The court also directed the GBA to re-inspect the drains on Saturday, and if the petitioners provide an alternative course then the GBA should re-consider diverting the course of the drains and ensure free flow of water into Subramanyapura Lake. However, in case of diverting the course of the drain, the GBA should also ensure that adjacent land owners are not disturbed and no inconvenience was caused to them, the court made it clear.

Justice R. Nataraj passed the order while dismissing the petition filed in 2014 by Mantri Tranquil Apartment Owners' Welfare Association and Mantri Developers Private Limited and the petition filed in 2019 by Royal Palms Residents' Welfare Association, and B.R. Sanjay. "Having regard to the fact that the Subramanyapura Lake is a live lake and Gubbalala village has a catchment area of nearly a sq. km, in the interest of the other general public residing in the area, this court considers it appropriate to provide an opportunity to the petitioners to suggest an alternative course for restoration of the storm-water drains.

RCC retaining walls

Failing this, the GBA is directed to proceed to remove the constructions put up over the storm-water drains and restore them, and if possible by erecting RCC retaining walls of the drain for the desired size," the court observed. The petitioners had questioned the legality of the notices issued in 2014 by the erstwhile Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) asking the petitioners to demolish the structures put up by encroaching upon the drains.

In case of the Mantri Transquil apartment, the petitioners claimed that the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) approved the plan in 2007 and the complex was built as per the sanctioned plan and there was no drain in the constructed area as per the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) of 1995. Even the Royal Palm association too claimed that no drain was shown in the CDP-1995.

The BDA too told the court that there was no drain on particular survey numbers in the CDP-1995 but the Revised Master Plan-2015 showed drains on parts of constructed portion, and the BBMP had established that existence of drain through the village map. The encroachment of drains was disclosed when the BBMP, on the directions of the court way back in 2011 for clearing encroachment of drains across the city. The contention that the storm-water drain was not shown in the master plan is inconsequential as once the land is vested in the State government, unless it is shown that rights are created in respect of that land, no one, including the petitioners can claim any right, title or interest over it even if a master plan does not reflect that," the court said.

The court also pointed out several exercises were conducted since 2014 to find out whether there was encroachment of the drain and every exercise has shown that there was encroachment.

Meanwhile, the court said that it could rule out involvement of erstwhile owners of these lands in effacing the drains from the CDP in collusion with the then officials of the BDA as it would have been difficult to develop these lands as the drain, which cut through the lands, was preserved, compelling maintenance of buffer area from the drain. The fact that the course of the drain has been altered is evident from the expert report, the court said.

DKS orders maintenance of ornamental plants

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has directed the Urban Development Department to take steps to restore and maintain ornamental plants along road dividers and roadsides in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) limits, noting that several stretches are currently in poor condition. Mr. Shivakumar said that many ornamental plants grown on medians and roadsides were not being properly nourished.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the authorities to immediately begin clearing dried waste and debris from these areas.

Mr. Shivakumar called for the preparation of a structured work plan to carry out maintenance activities on a regular basis and instructed that the implementation of the plan be reviewed in every meeting.

History-sheeter hacked to death

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 25-year-old rowdy-sheeter was hacked to death allegedly by a group of armed assailants at Amarajyothi Layout in Thanisandra on Wednesday. Police have launched a search to nab the accused.

The victim has been identified as Pavan Kumar, 25, a history-sheeter listed at the D.J. Halli police station. According to the police, six persons arrived on three motorcycles wearing helmets, and attacked Pavan while he was standing outside his house in Amarajyothi Layout. He was killed on the spot. The police have registered a case.

Indian Overseas Bank
Information Technology Department
Central Office: 763, ANNA SALAI, CHENNAI-600002

Indian Overseas bank (IOB) invites bids for the following:

GOVERNMENT E-MARKET PORTAL - Renewal of Talend Big Data Licenses (3 nos).

BID NO: GEM/2026/B/7291792 DATED 26.02.2026

The Above GEM Tender document is also available and can be downloaded from the following websites **www.iob.bank.in** & **www.gem.gov.in** For Tender details and future amendments, if any, keep referring to the following website **www.gem.gov.in**

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Important information regarding TDS / TCS correction timelines

- As per Income Tax regulations effective from 01.04.2026, TDS/TCS corrections for Q4 FY 2018-19 to Q3 FY 2023-24 can be processed only up to **31.03.2026.**
- Requests received after this date will be time-barred and not accepted.
- **Customers seeking corrections must submit their requests well before 31.03.2026.**
- For assistance, customers may contact the nearest **Union Bank of India branch.**

Timings
BENGALURU

SATURDAY, FEB. 28
RISE 06:36 SET 18:28
RISE 15:41 SET 04:00

SUNDAY, MAR. 01
RISE 06:36 SET 18:28
RISE 16:40 SET 04:51

MONDAY, MAR. 02
RISE 06:35 SET 18:28
RISE 17:36 SET 05:38

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	33	20
Bengaluru	32	21

Bengaluru Today
32°C The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
32°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be little warm. Night also will be slight cool.

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THE HINDU
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Ashok threatens to launch 'Save Mysuru Silk' campaign

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok joined the protesting employees of Karnataka Silk Industries Corporation's (KSIC) filature factory in T. Narsipur, near here, on Friday, and threatened to launch a 'Save Mysuru Silk' campaign against the construction of a stadium on the factory premises.

Speaking at the protest site, Mr. Ashok said the BJP will raise the issue in the coming Budget session of the State Legislature, scheduled to start on March 6, if the government does not drop the proposal to construct a stadium on the filature factory premises.

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

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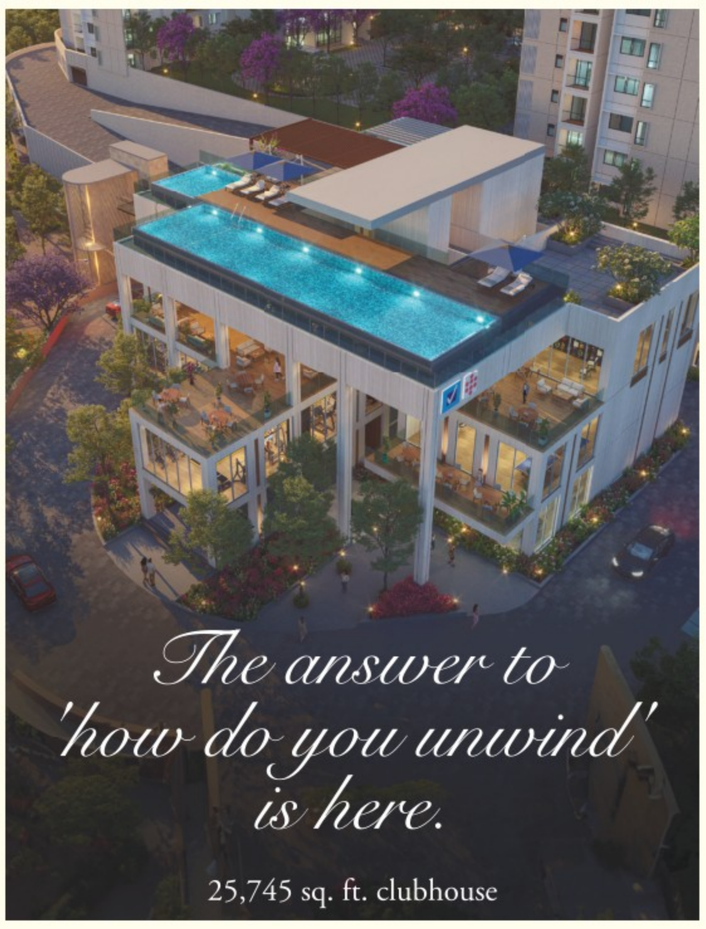

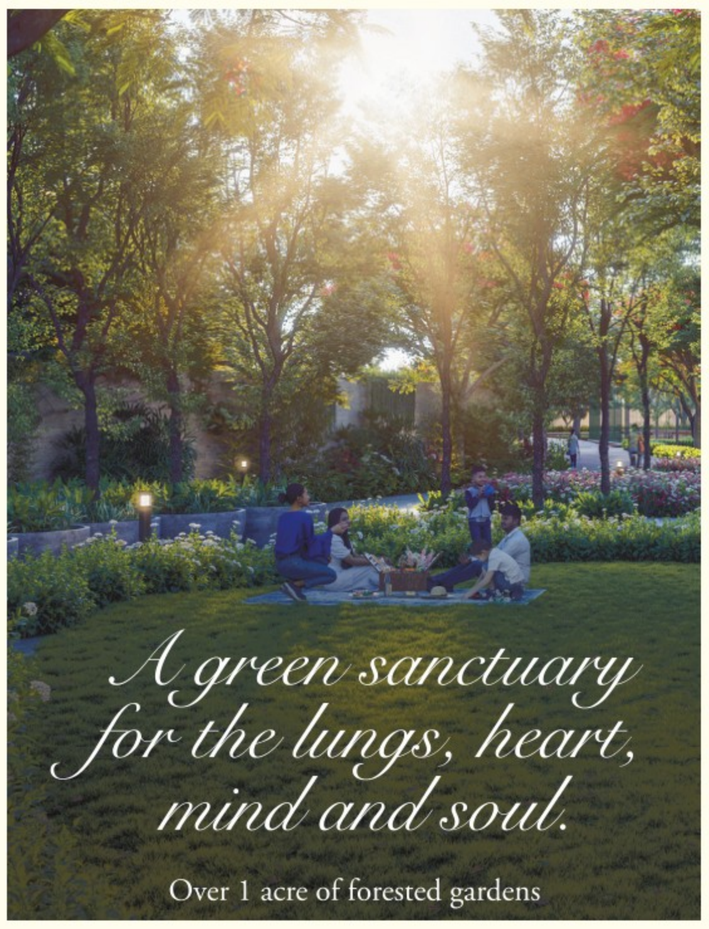

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No. BDA/EE(W)/T-03/2025-26 Date: 26.02.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)

(Through GoK e-procurement platform https:/kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

Tenders are invited through e-Procurement Tendering System by the Executive Engineer, West Division, BDA, Bengaluru, on behalf of the Commissioner, BDA, Bengaluru, from eligible tenderers in two cover system for the work mentioned below.

Name of the work: Construction of RCC Drain, formation of Roads, Development of Parks in Sir M. Vishweshwariah Layout 1st to 6th Blocks and Further Extension Sir M. Vishweshwaraiah Layout 7th to 9th Blocks. Approx. Value of work including GST: **Rs. 7479.00 lakhs.** EMD: **Refer Karnataka Public Procurement Portal.** Period of Completion: **11 Months.**

For further details, please log on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or call e-Procurement Help desk on 080-46010000/68948777.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, West Division, BDA, Bengaluru

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY & DRAINAGE BOARD

O/o The Chief Engineer, Jalabhavan

#P-4, 10 Main, 3rd Cross, 34 Floor, Saraswathipuram, Mysuru-09

Phone: 0821-2545894 E-mail: kwbcemys2014@gmail.com

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender for the work of **Providing Sewer Missing links, outfall Sewer line, HSC'S, construction of wetwells & DG rooms, Supply, Erection, Electrification and Commissioning of Suitable HP non-clog sewage pump sets and Suitable capacity DG Set and allied Accessories under balance works of UGD Scheme to Pandavapura town (Lumpsum Tender - No Variation)** is invited vide Indent No. KUWSDB/2025-26/WS/WORK_INDENT495.

For details - **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/- **Chief Engineer**
KUWS & D Board, Mysuru

DIPR/MYS/1759/SA/2025-26

UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

ESTATE OFFICE, GKVK, BENGALURU-560 065

No. EO/TN/26/2025-26, DATED: 21.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through e-procurement portal only)

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore has invited Tender in the prescribed form as per Standard Tender Document KW3 & KW4 from the registered KPWD/PWD/ Contractors for the Sl. No.1 and 2. The details of the notification, tender document, specifications are available in the website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The cost of tender document is as per e-procurement portal. The EMD has to be paid in the e-procurement portal using e-Procurement payment modes.

The above works are under Two Cover system. The details for two cover system is to be uploaded as per Standard Tender Document.

The Blank Tender Documents can be downloaded from www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The pre-bid meeting will be held on **02.03.2026 at 10:30 am** in the tender room of Estate office. Last date and time for uploading is **05.03.2026 upto 4.00 P.M.** The Technical Bid will be opened on **07.03.2026 at 10.30 A.M.** The Financial Bid will be opened on **10.03.2026 at 10.30 A.M.** For more details please contact e-portal help desk at **support@eprochelpdesk.com or 8046010000/8068948777** on working days and this office during working hour, Phone No.080-23332765.

Sd/-
Estate Officer

DIPR/CP/5902/AKAR/2025-26

Office of the Executive Engineer Public Works Department (PWD), Chikkamagaluru Division, Chikkamagaluru

Short-Term Tender Notice No.: 35/2025-26 Date: 24.02.2026

In the Tender Notice seen above Tender is invited from eligible contractors for total 11 works through KPP Portal under Head of Account: 3054-03-337-0-05-200 Maintenance of State Highways, 3054-04-337-1-10-200 Maintenance of District Main Roads, 5054-80-190-0-01-132 Karnataka State Road Development Corporation Limited – Capital Expenditure (State Highway Road Bridges) & (District Main Roads Bridges), 4059-80-051-0-32-386 Judicial Buildings related to Sub divisions of Public Works Department, Chikkamagaluru District. Details of capabilities to undertaking or having implemented the works (as per Standard Tender Document KW-1, 2, 3 & 4) should be attached. Contractors can be awarded the contract only if they have the minimum eligibilities as mentioned in Act 3. Minimum Approx. Amount Rs. 15.00 lakhs and Maximum Approx. Amount Rs. 172.38 lakhs. For Tender to be submitted through KPP Portal for 11 works (Indent No. 33866, 32714 (2nd Call) on 04.03.2026, Indent No. 34085, 34086, 34087 on 06.03.2026, Indent No. 33992, 33990, 34003, 34004, 34006, 34007 on 09.03.2026) tender should be submitted within 4.30 PM. For further details the case worker can be contacted during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Public Works Department (PWD), Chikkamagaluru Division, Chikkamagaluru

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/173/1914

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE, INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ISRO) CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP

ISRO-TELEMETRY TRACKING & COMMAND NETWORK (ISTRAC)

Plot No.12 & 13, 3rd Main, 2nd Phase, Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru-560 058. Ph:080-28094541, 4186

BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

1. On behalf of President of India, sealed **item rate E-Tender** is invited from Contractors of appropriate class for the following work.

1	Name of Work	**Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 10kWP (minimum capacity) to 50kWP (maximum capacity) capacity (totalling to 380kWP) rooftop Solar Power Plant at various location of ISTRAC, ISRO, (2nd Call)**
2	E-Tenders Notice	**ISTRAC/CMG/E/CON/E-Tender-114/ 2025-2026 Dated: 26.02.2026**
3	Estimate cost put to tender	**Rs. 230.00 Lakhs**
4	Tender Document details	**E-Tenders**
5	Period of completion in months reckoned from the 15th day of date of issue of work order	**Six (06) Months**
6	Period during which the tender document can be downloaded	**From 16.00 hrs. on 27.02.2026 to 21.03.2026 till 16.00 hrs.**
7	Bid clarifications	**From 11.00 hrs 28.02.2026 to 22.03.2026 till 16.00 hrs.**
8	Last date and time of reply to Bid clarification	**23.03.2026 up to 16.00 hrs.**
9	Last date & time of receipt of tenders	**24.03.2026 up to 16.00 hrs.**
10	Due date and time of opening of tenders	**26.03.2026 after 11.00 hrs.**
11	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**Rs. 4,60,000/-**

2. For eligibility crteria and others details, interested tenderers may please refer to the detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tenders (NIT) on the website: **https://www.isro.gov.in/Tenders.html** and tender free view at **https://www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.**

Sd/- Group Head, CMG

Office of the Executive Engineer Public Works Department (PWD), Chikkamagaluru Division, Chikkamagaluru

Notice Inviting Tender

Tender Corrigendum Notice No.: 01/2025-26 Date: 26.02.2026

Ref.: Short-Term Tender Notice No.: 35/2025-26 Date: 24.02.2026

In the Tender Notice referred seen above works related to Chikkamagaluru Sub Division, Chikkamagaluru Division invited under head of Account 4059-80-051-0-32-386 Judicial Buildings works of Serial No. 8 (Indent No. 34003), 9 (Indent No. 34004), 10(Indent No. 34006), (General Category) was invited through KPP Portal from eligible contractors and last date was fixed as 09.03.2026. Due to Technical reasons date for Tender submission has been preponed and refixed as 05.03.2026. There are no other changes.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Chikkamagaluru Division, Chikkamagalur.

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/179/1906

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Chamarajapete Division, 2nd Main, T.R. Mill Road, Bengaluru-18

No:EE/CMP/Tend/E-PROC/20/2025-26 Dated:27.02.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through **GOK** KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** only) Tender for the following works on item rate basis are invited as per Standard Bid Documents KW-1 & KW-2, by the Executive Engineer, Chamarajapete Division, BCCC, Zone-2 on behalf of the Commissioner, BCCC from the registered contractors of Bengaluru Central City Corporation or Equivalent registration with CPWD/KPWD/BCCC/Railways/ MES or any State Government Organizations may apply through KPPP Portal for the works mentioned below.

Sl No.	Name of the works/Category
1.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 153 Padarayanapura (CAT-II(A)) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.75,000/-
2.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 154 Rayapuram. (Others) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.75,000/-
3.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 155 Devaraj Urs Nagar. (SC) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.30,000/-
4.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 156 Chalavadipalya. (Others) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.75,000/-
5.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 157 K.R. Market. (Others) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.75,000/-
6.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 158 Chamarajapet. (Others) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.75,000/-
7.	Annual Maintenance of Desilting of Drains in Ward No. 159 Azad Nagar. (ST) Approx Value of Works: Rs.30.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.30,000/-
8.	Maintenance of BBMP Division, Subdivision & Ward Office Buildings in Chamarajpet Constituency. (Others) Approx Value of Works: Rs.25.00 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.62,500/-

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPP Portal of the Government of Karnataka from 04.03.2026 after 11.30 am. (2) Last date for uploading the Filled Proposals is 12.03.2026 upto 4:00 pm. (3) Date of opening of Financial Proposals is 13.03.2026 after 4.30 pm.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Chamarajapete Division, Bengaluru Central City Corporation

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Tender Notice No: CGM/PROJ/VJA/33KV LINE WORKS/SIP-18/2025-26

Bids through **apeprocurement.gov.in** are invited from eligible bidders for supply and erection of 9.62KM new 33KV line from newly constructed 132/33KV EHT SS at Gannavaram Airport to 33/11KV Uppuluru Sub-station to provide alternate supply to 33/11KV Edupugallu Sub-station, 33/11KV Uppuluru Sub-station and 33/11KV Maredumaka Sub-station in operation section Kankipadu of Gunadala Division in NTR circle of APCPDCL under T&D Improvement Scheme with APCPDCL funds on Turnkey basis. The tender information will be made available in AP e-procurement Portal from **28.02.2026, 18:00 Hrs,** Last date for Bid submission online is **07.03.2026, 16:00 Hrs.** e-mail: **apcpdclpiu@gmail.com**

Sd/- Chief General Manager/Projects, APCPDCL: Vijayawada

Office of the Executive Engineer Public Works Department (PWD), Chikkamagaluru Division, Chikkamagaluru

Notice Inviting Tender

Tender Postponement Notice No.: 09/2025-26 Date: 21.02.2026

Ref.: Short-Term Tender Notice No.: 31 & 32/2025-26 Date: 07.02.2026 & 09.02.2026

In the Tender Notice referred seen above Tender in the Short-Term Tender No. 31 invited for works related to Chikkamagaluru Sub Division, Chikkamagaluru Division under head of Account 4059-80-051-0-60-132 Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Programme Other Capital Expenditure works of Serial No. 3, 5 & 10 (General Category) and in the Short-Term Tender No. 32 works of Sl. No. 11 (General Category) was invited through KPP Portal from eligible contractors and last date was fixed as 23.02.2026. Due to Technical reasons date for Tender submission has been postponed and refixed as 05.03.2026. There are no other changes.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Chikkamagaluru Division, Chikkamagalur.

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/172/02/1913

Government of Karnataka Zilla Panchayat, Chitradurga

Office of the District Health and Family Welfare, Chitradurga.

ದೂ: ಸಂ: 08194–235464 ಇ–ಮೇಲ್: dhochitradurga@gmail.com

Ref. No: DHFW/SARABA/03/2025-26 DATE: 25-02-2026

E-TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

E- Tender is called for Diet items at District health and family welfare office of chitradurga provide service under various institutions Two taluk general hospitals(Hosadurg, Molakalmuru) and 11 community health Centre'sfor the year of 2026-27.

Tender documents should be uploaded in kppp portal from the Date: 25-02-2026 to Date:27-03-2026 timings within 5-00 pm, and Technical bid will be opened on Date:30-03-2026 at 11-00 am, terms and conditions of tender can obtained in website http://.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

For further details contact the office ofDistrict health and family welfare office,chitradurga during office hours.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/ 709/2025-26

Sd/- District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Chitradurga.

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For information, please visit https://www.iiseradmission.in/

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- 4-Year BS in Economics Sciences at IISER Bhopal
- 4-Year BS in Economic and Statistical Sciences at IISER Tirupati
- 4-Year B.Tech in Chemical Engineering at IISER Bhopal
- 4-Year B.Tech in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at IISER Bhopal
- 4-Year B.Tech in Data Science & Engineering at IISER Bhopal

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Candidates who have passed class XII/equivalent examination or minimum 3-year Diploma program in science stream (in 2024, 2025 or 2026) with minimum 60% marks (55% for SC/ST/PwD) are eligible to apply for IISER Aptitude Test (IAT) 2026.

For more details visit:

https://www.iiseradmission.in/#eligibility

All admissions will be only through IAT 2026

SCHOLARSHIP

Admitted students may be eligible for competitive INSPIRE scholarship as per the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India norms.

IMPORTANT DATES

Application Portal Opens on: **Thursday, March 5, 2026**
Last Date for Online Applications: **Monday, April 13, 2026**
IISER Aptitude Test: **Sunday, June 7, 2026 (9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon IST)**

All inquiries must be addressed to: **CHAIRPERSON, JOINT ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE 2026**
Email: askjac2026@iiserbpr.ac.in , Website: https://www.iiseradmission.in/#home
Phone: +91 7205457461 (2:00 to 5:00 PM IST, Working Days)

SCAN ME

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, MR. NIRMAL RAMESH SHAH, Aged about 49 years, Son of Sri. Ramesh C. Shah, Residing at Flat No. 1322, Sobha Dewflower, 4th Cross, Sarakki Main Road, J P Nagar, 1st Phase, Bangalore South, Pin Code – 560 078, Karnataka, who is the absolute owner of property described in Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated, decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said respective owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of Inheritance, Mortgage, Sale, Conveyance, MOU, Joint Development Agreement, General Power of Attorney, Agreement to Sell, Transfer, Lease Deed, Tenancy, License, Lien, Charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office at No. 276, Ground Floor, 12th Main, 5th Cross, Sector - 5, HSR Layout, Bangalore - 560 102, within 15 days from the date of publication hereof, failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

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Dated this 28th day of February, 2026, at Bangalore,

RASHMI D., ADVOCATE,
No. 276, Ground Floor, 12th Main, 5th Cross, Sector -5, HSR Layout, Bangalore - 560 102.
Phone: +91-9480492319.

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, KAVITHA S C, R/at 645, Sondekoppa, Bangalore 562130 do hereby declare that I have changed my son name from DAIVIK P SAGAR to DAIVIK ABHIVART for all his future purposes through affidavit 26–02–2026 sworn before notary B.Seshagiri.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT M.I & G.W.D.D. DIVISION, VIJAYAPUR

No.EE/MID/VJP/AE-1,4/4702-SCP-TSP/TND/2025-26/4529 Date:26.02.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department, Division Vijayapur invites work tenders through "E-Procurement" from eligible contractor on item rate Tender for following works as per KTPP Act-2000 and latest amendments.

4702 Consultancy Works :- Total 7 Works, Amount put to Tender **Rs.20.43 Lakhs, Tender Period for the above works are One(1) Months including monsoon.**

4702 SCP Works :- Total 8 Works/Package Works, Amount put to Tender **Rs.82.80 Lakhs, Tender Period for the above works are Three(3) Months including monsoon.**

4702 TSP Works :- Total 4 Works, Amount put to Tender **Rs.14.40 Lakhs, Tender Period for the above works are Three(3) Months including monsoon.**

Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka E-Procurement website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home under login for Contractors from **27.02.2026.** Tenders may be submitted on electronically in E-Procurement portal up to **17-30 hrs.** on **07.03.2026.** Interested contractors information regarding works may be obtained from this office or e-Procurement helpdesk (Ph.No.080-25501216 & 080-25501227) upto **17-30 hrs.** on **06.03.2026.** Tenders shall be quoted without adding GST and other details can be seen in the tender documents.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, MI & GWDD Division, Vijayapur

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/761/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಐಎ/2025–26

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-89/3800/2025-26 Date: 27.02.2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited for the work mentioned below as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors holding valid Super Grade Electrical License issued from KCEI & Class-1 (Civil) issued from KPWD, Government of Karnataka who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the following work as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Work : Part-A : Establishment of 2x20 MVA, 66/11kV Substation at Gowribidanur Industrial Area Phase-3, Chikkaballapura District. **Part-B:** (i) Construction of 66kV SC line on DC towers from Kudumalakunte 66/11kV Substation to common tower for distance of 0.958 kms. (ii) Construction of 66kV SC line on DC Towers from Vidhurashwatha 66/11kV Substation to common tower for distance of 3.355 kms. (iii) Construction of 66kV DC Line on DC Towers from Common Point to proposed 66/11kV Gowribidnur Industrial Area 3rd Phase Substation for a distance of 1.971 kms. **Part-C:** (i) Providing 1 No of additional line TB at existing Industrial 66/11kV Substation Kudumalakunte Area in Chikkaballapura District. (ii) Providing 1 No of additional TB at existing 66/11kV Substation Vidurashwatha in Chikkaballapura District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **23.03.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5922/Zen/2025-26

PROPERTYPLUS
HOMES AND REAL ESTATE NEWS | THE HINDU
thehindu.com/features/homes-and-gardens

COVER

Designing care as destination

How evolving medical tourism is reshaping healthcare real estate

Varun Agarwal

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Medical tourism is evolving in scale, intent, and expectation. Patients today are no longer travelling only for affordable treatment or specialised procedures unavailable in their hometowns. Increasingly, they are choosing destinations that offer a complete care ecosystem that integrates medical excellence, comfort, ease of navigation, and post-treatment recovery.

This shift is reshaping healthcare real estate. Hospitals catering to international patients are no longer viewed purely as clinical institutions. They are being planned, positioned, and operated as long-term healthcare assets that must compete at a global level.

Medical tourism 2.0 reflects this transition. It places architecture and real estate strategy at the centre of decision-making, influencing land use, zoning, master planning, asset performance, and the overall positioning of healthcare developments.

International patients often arrive after long journeys, accompanied by family members who stay for extended periods. Hospitals that are easy to approach, clearly organised, and intuitively zoned reduce cognitive and emotional stress from the moment of arrival. This clarity is not cosmetic. It is a real estate advantage that directly influences patient throughput, length of stay, and operational efficiency.

Entrance plazas, arrival courts, legible lobbies, and clearly segregated circulation for patients, visitors, and staff become critical planning decisions. These elements enhance wayfinding, reduce congestion, and allow large healthcare campuses to operate smoothly while handling global footfall.

Concealed medical equipment, controlled lighting, acoustic comfort, and adequate space for attendants transform rooms into environments suited for longer stays.

Wellness-oriented spaces such as landscaped courtyards, therapy zones with outdoor access, and daylight-rich recovery are becoming integral to healthcare real estate, enhancing patient outcomes while increasing the perceived value of the asset.

Hospitals designed for medical tourism must accommodate teleconsultation suites, digital check-in zones, smart patient rooms, and integrated building management systems. Architecture must support uninterrupted data flow through dedicated service zones, server spaces, and adaptable technical shafts.

When technology is seamlessly embedded into the physical environment, patient movement becomes more efficient, staff workflows improve, and waiting times reduce. From a real estate standpoint, this integration enhances operational resilience and ensures that facilities remain competitive as healthcare delivery models evolve.

Real estate planning that accounts for cultural diversity improves usability and inclusivity without increasing complexity. Neutral prayer spaces, universally understood signage systems, flexible room layouts, and kitchens capable of supporting varied dietary requirements all contribute to a sense of belonging.

Efficient facades, shading strategies, optimised daylighting, renewable energy systems, water management, and climate-responsive landscape design contribute to long-term operational stability. These strategies reduce lifecycle costs, improve building performance, and ensure reliability under continuous use.

In Medical Tourism 2.0, sustainable design is directly linked to both patient confidence and financial prudence.

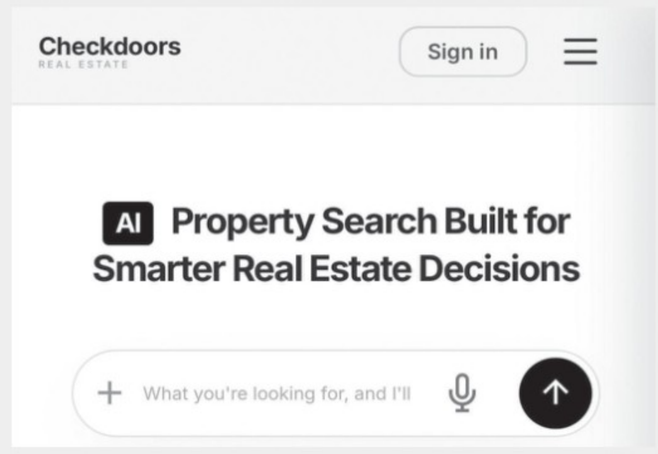
Medical tourism 2.0 calls for architecture that prioritises clarity over grandeur, efficiency over excess, and familiarity over luxury. For architects, developers, and operators, this represents a shift towards designing healthcare assets that are resilient, adaptable, and globally relevant.

The writer is director and co-founder of Renascent Consultants.

ADVERTISEMENT

AI Platform. Built Different. Built for NRIs

The Future of Real Estate Is Here. And It Talks to You.



India's real estate market is on fire. Diaspora wealth is booming. And finally, artificial intelligence is poised to alleviate the coordination headaches that have long plagued property investment. Yet most NRIs are still stuck in the past: scrolling through generic portals, wading through endless listings, and staring at dashboards that resemble spreadsheets more than user-friendly solutions.

Enter Checkdoors.com. Founded by US-based tech veterans who themselves struggled with property purchases in India, this platform isn't just another real estate site—it's built from the ground up for the NRI experience. The team didn't just notice the problem; they experienced it firsthand. This firsthand frustration became the driving force behind a platform designed around how NRIs actually buy property, rather than how others presume they should.

Checkdoors.com sits at the crossroads of three seismic shifts: a booming market, rising diaspora wealth, and AI that finally delivers on its promise. Its conversational AI isn't a gimmick—it's a guide. By simply sharing your budget, city preferences, school proximity, or rental yield expectations, the platform is able to surface the right five properties—not five hundred. Because it's NRI-first, the platform has a unique dataset that no one else can match. Every search, every shortlist, and every transaction teaches the AI something new—making it smarter, sharper, and far more tailored with every interaction.

The advantages extend beyond buyers. Builders benefit too, as AI-scored leads appear directly on their dashboards. They gain access to global NRI expos at their fingertips, and analytics provide actionable insights to drive their sales strategies. The vision of Checkdoors.com goes far beyond mere property discovery, seamlessly managing every aspect of the real estate journey. From the first search to post-purchase maintenance, Checkdoors.com is engineered to handle it all. Tenants, compliance, and upkeep are managed effortlessly, even from thousands of miles away. This level of service ensures that buyers remain engaged for years while builders can close deals faster. As a result, the network grows: every new buyer attracts more builders, and every new builder brings in more buyers. This isn't just a portal; it's your AI-powered real estate partner. Imagine a platform that matches new listings to your preferences even before you begin your search. It alerts builders when high-intent NRIs are ready to invest, coordinating across time zones to ensure seamless connections between buyers in California and builders in India. With over 30 builders on board, 500+ leads delivered, and more than 1,000 NRIs engaged at exclusive US expos, Checkdoors.com is proving that AI can transform the global property market—one conversation at a time. Furthermore, it acts as a bridge for NRIs looking to invest in their homeland while managing their overseas commitments. Its streamlined approach not only simplifies the search for properties but also enhances the overall investment experience.

As the demand for real estate continues to grow globally, particularly from the NRI community, platforms like Checkdoors.com are setting a new standard. They eliminate the barriers typically faced by international investors, offering them the tools they need to make informed decisions. With technology at the forefront of this transformation, Checkdoors.com is not just adapting to the future of real estate; it's actively shaping it.

The future of real estate is indeed here, and with it comes the promise of empowerment, accessibility, and unwavering trust, making property investment in India less of a headache and more of an opportunity. If you are an NRI looking to navigate the complex world of real estate, Checkdoors.com is your ultimate destination—your partner in this exciting journey.

Visit checkdoors.com today. Your ideal property is waiting.

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8880 013 310

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AIRPORT ROAD
NEAR PRESTIGE TECH IT PARK
₹ 87.89 L - 1.21 Cr*
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₹ 67.28 - 95.28 Lakhs*
8880 461 461

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/281125/008287 — G+14
JIGANI
5 MINS. APC CIRCLE
₹ 58.45 - 92.06 Lakhs*
8880 003 003

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/151223/006489 — G+3
BANASHANKARI
OPP. NPS SCHOOL (3 & 4-BHK)
₹ 1.45 - 2.17 Cr*
8880 461 461

PRM/KA/RERA/1250/301/PR/251024/007178 — G+14
YELAHANKA
5 MINS. RAJANUKUNTE
₹ 54.85 - 97.21 Lakhs*
8880 465 465

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006973 — G+14
BANNERGHATTA RD.
NEAR KOPPA GATE
₹ 62.42 - 85.23 Lakhs*
8880 013 310

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/230126/008427 — G+4
SARJAPURA
SARJAPUR - ATTIBELE ROAD
₹ 63.60 - 83.25 Lakhs*
8880 003 003

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006972 — G+4
HOSA ROAD METRO
NEAR ELECTRONIC CITY
₹ 67.92 L - 1.34 Cr*
8880 013 310

PRM/KA/RERA/1250/304/PR/150224/006622 — G+14
WHITEFIELD
SOUKYA ROAD
₹ 70.65 L - 1.06 Cr*
8880 461 461

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BG-BGE

Land acquisition fast-tracked to improve ORR-PRR connectivity

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The East City Corporation has taken possession of 4,150.45 sq. m. of relinquished land earmarked for road widening along ITPL Main Road in the K.R. Puram Zone

The East City Corporation has initiated steps to fast-track land acquisition for a long-pending road project to improve connectivity between the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and the proposed Peripheral Ring Road (PRR).

At a meeting held on Friday, Additional Commissioner Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar directed officials to expedite procedures related to the implementation of a 24-metre-wide road, as proposed in the Revised Master Plan-2015. The road is planned as a Phase-1 project connecting ORR to PRR through Mahadevapura, Doddanekkundi, Pattandur Agrahara, and other areas within the corporation limits.

Mr. Sudhakar instructed the officials to immediately take possession of properties already marked for road widening in approved development plans. Departments involved were also asked to compile details of properties where acquisition is still pending and initiate the process for issuing the required land acquisition notification.

Town Planning officials from the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) and the officials within the East City Corporation were told to submit copies of approved development plans and relevant road development (RD) documents for land reserved near Bagmane Tech Park for the Land Acquisition and Transferable Development Rights (TDR).

Executive engineers were directed to take possession of relinquished properties earmarked for road widening without delay, while Survey Department officials were asked to inspect 'kharab' land and submit a report. Mr. Sudhakar asked officials to coordinate with Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) to complete land acquisition required near the special development zone developed by KIADB close to Seetharampalya Metro Station. The Revenue Department was instructed to furnish ownership documents for the remaining lands needed for the connecting road to the TDR section at the earliest. The Land Acquisition Section has been directed to complete formalities and issue the land acquisition notification by March 10.

The East City Corporation has taken possession of 4,150.45 sq. m. of relinquished land earmarked for road widening along ITPL Main Road in the K.R. Puram Zone, Commissioner D.S. Ramesh said.

THE TAMIL NADU COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED,
AAVIN ILLAM, 3-A Pasumpon Muthuramalinganar Salai, NANDANAM, CHENNAI-600035,
TELEPHONE: 044-23464500, FAX : 044-23464505 E-MAIL: AAVINDGMENG@YAHOO.CO.IN
Ref. No. 2179/Proj.3/2026 **NOTICE INVITING TENDER (e-Submission Only)** Dated: 27.02.2026

The TCMPF Ltd., invites TWO PART TENDERS by way of e-Submission through e-Procurement Portal from the reputed firms for following items / works for TCMPF/DCMPU Dairies.

Sl.No.	Name of the works / Items	EMD Value Rs.
1.	Procurement of Solar Power under Captive Consumption (Intra State) for TCMPF and DCMPU's fund	Rs.50,00,000.00
2.	Retreatment and Disposal of Treated Waste Water at Sholinganallur Dairy	Rs.50,000.00
3.	Construction of Boiler shed with Mezzanine floor and allied structures at 60MTPD Powder Plant, Padalur Dairy.	Rs.1,36,500.00

Sl.No.	Tender Document Availability	Pre Bid Meeting Date	E-Submission End Date	Technical Bid opening Date
1-2	05.03.2026 to 06.04.2026 upto 3.00 PM	13.03.2026 at 11.00 AM	06.04.2026 at 3.00 PM	07.04.2026 at 3.00 P.M
3	02.03.2026 to 17.03.2026 upto 3.00 PM	11.03.2026 at 3.00 PM	17.03.2026 at 3.00 PM	18.03.2026 at 3.00 PM

The Technical Bids shall be opened through online e-Procurement Portal **(https://tntenders.gov.in)** on mentioned date at above mentioned address. The bidders should submit their bids only through e-Procurement Portal **(https://tntenders.gov.in).** All other details can be seen in the tender documents, the tender documents can be downloaded at the above website. Corrigendum / Addendum to this publication, if any would appear only on the above said website.

Deputy General Manager (Engg.),
DIPR/ 1454 /TENDER/2026 Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd.

TAMILNADU INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED (TIDCO)
No.19-A, Rukmini Lakshmipathi Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008
CIN-U65993TN1965SGC005327

e-TENDER NOTICE

NOTICE NO. TIDCO/FT/IFMS/2026 **Date: 28.02.2026**

Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited, a Government of Tamil Nadu enterprises intend to select an agency to Provide Asset and Integrated Facility Management Services for the Fintech Tower located in the Fintech City, Nandambakkam, Chennai. In this context, TIDCO invites proposals from prospective firms to undertake the above said work. Interested can download the RFP from the website https://tntenders.gov.in & **https://tidco.com**

The Schedule for the proposal process is as follows: -

1. Last date and time for submission of Proposals/ Bids is on or before 3.00 PM Hrs on 30.03.2026 through **https://tntenders.gov.in**
2. Opening of Technical Proposals/ Bids is at 4.00 PM on 30.03.2026 at TIDCO Office.

The Managing Director
Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited
19-A, Rukmini Lakshmipathi Road, Egmore, Chennai – 600 008.
DIPR/1450/Tender/2026 E-mail: cmd@tidco.com, Website : https://tidco.com

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The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam-691 583
Phone: 0476-2651215 to 2651217, e-mail: md@kmml.com, URL: www.kmml.com

TENDER NOTICE

For more details please visit E-Tendering Portal, https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

Sl No.	Tender ID	Items
1	2026_KMML_839944_1	Rubber lining work of Clarifier (K 401) in IBP
2	2026_KMML_840765_1	Supply of N301 acid scrubber (Rubber Lined)
3	2026_KMML_841109_1	Supply of Safety Shoes Leather-Brown

Chavara 28.02.2026 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
TENDER CALL NOTICE

HE-MC-MISC-0037-2025/10100/ Dt.: 23.02.2026

(For AI-Enabled Examination Security, Surveillance and Ancillary Support Services during Conduct of Multiple Examinations)

Sealed tenders are invited from eligible and experienced agencies for AI-Enabled Examination Security, Surveillance and Ancillary Support Services during Conduct of Multiple Examinations, by the Department of Higher Education, Government of Odisha. The last date and time for submission of the quotation is on or before **23.03.2026**.

For More details, Please visit our official website **https://dhe.odisha.gov.in**

NOTE : **The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason.**

Director, Higher Education
11001/43/2526 OIPR-11001/11001/1/25-26/0016

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Public Works Department)
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Public Works Department, Division: Yadgir.
GSTIN:29BLR002252F1DR

No.EE/PWD/Divn/YDG/TS-1, 2&3/e-Tender/2025-26/ 3161, Dated:26.02.2026

Short Term e-Tender Notification

1) Details of works: On behalf of Governor of Karnataka as per KTPP Amendment 1999-2000 Act 2000 Standard Bid Document KW-4 Karnataka Public Works Department invited item Rate Tender under KPPP Portal in Two Cover System from Eligible Agency/Contractors for following works Under 5054 KRDCL for the year 2025-26 Under Yadgir Taluka-(1)29580 and Shorapur Taluka-(1)29072 and Appendix-E (Plan) for the year 2024-25 & 2025-26 Under Shahapur Taluka-2(1)32497, Shorapur Taluka-(1)29176, (2)28755, (3)28756, (4)28760, Totally 7 (Seven) works Tender Called **2) Amount Put to Tender:** Miminimum Rs 300.00 Lakhs and Maximum Rs.500.00 Lakhs **3) Contractor Eligible Details:** Civil Class-II & Above **4) Tender Procesing Fee and EMD Details:** Tender Fee, EMD & Period as per kppp portal, **5) Last Date & Time for Tender Pre-Bid Meeting:** 05.03.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) **6) Last Date & Time for Tender queries/Clarification:**09.03.2026 (Upto 17.30 hrs) **7) Last Date & Time for Reciept of the tender in e-KPPP portal:**12.03.2026 (Upto 16.00 hrs) **8) Date & Time of Opening of the Tender/ Technical Bid:**13.03.2026 (16.30 hrs Onwards) **9) Date & Time of Opening of the Financial Bid:** 17.03.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) **10) For More Details Contact:**Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division: Yadgir. **11)Website Address:**https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

NOTE:Any Corrections / Changes will be updated in the kppp Portal only

DIP/YDG/558/KSMC&A/2025-26 **Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Yadgir.**

GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY
BUILDINGS AND ROADS DIVISION
P.W.D-KARAIKAL

e-TENDER NOTICE No.60/PW/BRK/2025-26, dated 27-02-2026

The Executive Engineer, Buildings and Roads Division, PWD, Karaikal, invites on behalf of the President of India, online bids for the following Work(s):

Tender No.60. Improvements to the internal road connecting Sivaji Nagar and Mariamman Kovil street in Karaikal.. Estimate Cost: **Rs.4,32,61,192/-** (inclusive of GST). Earnest Money: **Rs.8,65,224/-** Period of Completion: **Nine (9) Months** (Including Monsoon period).

Last time & date of submission of tender **upto 4.00 P.M. on 09-03-2026.** The bid forms and other details / information can be seen in the website: **https://pudutenders.gov.in**

Sd/-
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER-B&R
No. 378/DIP/KKL/ADVT/2026 P.W.D., KARAIKAL

UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES, RAICHUR
[ICAR, NAAC accredited and UGC u/s 12(B) & 2(f) approved]
Stores Purchase Officer, UAS, Raichur - 584104,
E-mail: spo@uasraichur.edu.in Ph: 08532-220165

E-Tender Notification No. SPO/UASR/E-Proc-16/2025-26, Dt: 26.02.2026.

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur is inviting e-tender notification for INVITING E- TENDER NOTIFICATION FOR THE SUPPLY, INSTALLATION OF SCIENTIFIC EQUIPEMNT & OTHER MATERIALS The interested suppliers are requested to participate through online only. The website address iswww.kppp.karnataka.gov.in(Indent Number:-UASRCR/2025-26/IND0087/CALL-II, 0070/CALL-II & IND0094 to IND0099)The last date for submission of filled in Tender Document is 06.03.2026.&(Indent Number:-UASRCR/2025-26/IND0066/CALL-III, 0067/CALL-IIIThe last date for submission of filled in Tender Document is 12.03.2026.

DIP/RCR/730/KSMCA/733/2025-26 **Sd/- Stores Purchase Officer UAS, Raichur.**

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited
(A Joint Venture of GoI & GoK)
e-mail: pdretail@bmrc.co.in **Website:** www.bmrc.co.in
Ph: 080-22969300
No.BMRCL/A (PD)/RETAIL OUTLET-18/2025-26 Date: 27.02.2026

CORRIGENDUM

Sub: Extension of Bid submission and Bid opening dates for Selection of Licensee for Retail Outlet at Metro Station- reg.

Ref: (1) Tender Notification No: BMRCL/A (PD)/RETAIL OUTLET-18/2025-26, Dated: 30/01/2026. **(2)** KPP Portal Reference Number: BMRCL/2025-26/SE0034/CALL-2 dtd.: 30/01/2026.

On 30-01-2026, BMRCL invited bids for the Selection of Licensee for Retail Outlet at Metro Station. In this connection, based on requests received from prospective bidders, the last date for bid submission has been extended as detailed hereunder.

REVISED KEY DETAILS

Last date & time for receipt of Tenders through KPP Portal	**9th March, 2026 before 17:00 Hrs.**
Last date & time for Opening of Technical Bid through KPP Portal	**10th March, 2026 at 17:30 Hrs.**

For further updates/information, please refer Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Director (Finance)

GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB
Department of Local Government
Municipal Corporation Amritsar

Tender Reference No. E-Tender Notice No. 178 Date 25.02.2026

The Department of	: Municipal Corporation, Amritsar Invites online Bids from eligible bidders for the works. "**Sweeping of Internal roads by mechanical means in Amritsar City for 3 Years (Alternate Days)**".
Closing Date and Time	**: 09.03.2026 upto 03:00 PM**
Opening of Technical Bid	**: 09.03.2026 at 03:30 PM**
EMD	: 1% of Estimate Amount
For Detail log onto	: **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**
Note	: Any Corrigendum(s) to the tender notice shall be published on the above website only.

Superintending Engineer(c), Municipal Corporation, Amritsar
1596/12/2025-26/8867

TAMIL NADU CORPORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN
(Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Government of Tamil Nadu)
Annai Teresa Mahalir Valagam, 1st Floor, Valluvarkottam High Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai – 600 034.
Phone No.044 – 2817 3412/13/14
Email : tncdwho@yahoo.co.in Website: www.https://tncdw.org

File No: 871/D1/2025 **Dated: 26.02.2026**

REQUEST FOR INVITE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STUDIES ON FUNDS RECEIVED IN THE PLF AND ITS IMPACT CREATED BOTH ON FAMILY AND SOCIETY IN TAMIL NADU

The Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women invites "Expression of Interest" from the eligible agencies to submit their interest for providing services for Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission funded by both Central and State Government for Assessment and Evaluation studies on Impact created among SHG women in Selected Blocks of Tamil Nadu on various **"FUNDS RECEIVED IN THE PLF AND ITS IMPACT CREATED BOTH IN FAMILY AND SOCIETY IN TAMIL NADU".** Interested agencies may submit their **"EXPRESSION OF INTEREST"** in a sealed envelope clearly super scribed as Expression of Interest for **Hiring of agency for Impact Assessment and Evaluation Studies in 370 PLF's of Tamil Nadu.** Last date and time for submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) is 06.03.2026 up to 4.00 p.m. This selection will be done on Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) following the State Procurement Guidelines. The agencies may obtain further information and procedures for submitting the "Expression of Interest" from the official website of TNCDW i.e., **www.https://tncdw.org**

DIPR/1460TENDER/2026 **MANAGING DIRECTOR, TNCDW**

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that, **Mr V G Srinivasa, son of Late Mr Gopalappa,** residing at Ramnathapura Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Karnataka - 562110, India (Contact No: +91 9535528674), the co-owner of land in Survey No 87/1 and 88/1 situated in Chinnakempanahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District was in the possession of :

(I) Sale Deed dated 11 March 1969 registered as document No 3710/1968-69 in relation to Survey No 38/11 (New Survey No 87) situated in Chinnakempanahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, ("Original Deed"), and

(ii) Sale deed dated 28 November 1975 registered as document No 2407/1975-76 in relation to Survey No 38/13 (New Survey No 88), situated in Chinnakempanahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District ("Original Deed").

The Co-owner has lost the aforesaid Original Sale Deeds while shifting to his new residence and has lodged a Complaint regarding the loss, and an FIR bearing No (GSC No) PO1878260600080 in Petition No 101/1878/2026 has been registered in this regard on 24 February 2026 at the Vishwanathapura Police Station, Devanahalli taluk, Bangalore.

Any person having any share, right, title, interest, claim, and/or demand in respect of the said Land or any part thereof, in any manner whatsoever or otherwise howsoever("**Claim**"), by virtue of having custody or possession of the Original Deed are hereby requested to contact the undersigned within 7 (Seven) days from the date of publication, of this notice, failing which, the Claim shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. If any person has found the Original Deed, they are requested to return the Original Deed to the Owner. Further, the public is hereby cautioned not to deal with the said Land based on the missing Original Deed other than with Owner and it is also notified that any such transactions entered into in respect of the said Land shall be considered illegal.

Date: 28 February 2026

GANGADHAR MEHER UNIVERSITY
AMRUTA VIHAR, SAMBALPUR-768004 (ODISHA)

No. 826 /GMU/2026 **Date 14.02.2026**

NOTICE

Corrigendum to Adv Notice No. 648/GMU/2026, Date-14/02/2026

It is for information of all concerned that the following correction has been made in the Advertisement Notice of this University.

1. The UGC Notification Dated should be read as **18th July, 2018** instead of 4th July, 2018.
2. The recruitment for Physics Dept. has been omitted from the list due to non-availability of vacant posts.
3. The commencement of online application form will be notified soon in the University website.

Beside above, all other terms and conditions of the Advertisement shall remain unchanged.

The concerned candidates are advised to visit the website of the University at **www.gmuniversity.ac.in** for any further information.

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BG-BGE

Karnataka launches State Action Plan on snakebite and rabies

The objective is to ensure that no life is lost due to delay in treatment or lack of access to medicines, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Friday published the State Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (SAPSE), becoming the first State in the country to release a comprehensive roadmap dedicated exclusively to tackling snakebite. The government simultaneously launched the State Action Plan for Rabies Elimination (SAPRE), reiterating its target of achieving zero human deaths due to dog-mediated rabies by 2030.

Launching the plans under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said the objective was to ensure that "no life is lost due to delay in treatment or lack of access to medicines."

Snakebite, classified by the World Health Organisation as a Neglected Tropical Disease, continues to pose a significant public health challenge. In India, estimates suggest around 50,000 deaths each year, besides a large number of survivors left with amputations or permanent disabilities. Public health experts have pointed out that the actual burden is likely higher, as many victims do not reach formal healthcare facilities. In Karnataka, recorded cases of snakebite envenoming and

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and others releasing the State Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming, in Bengaluru on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Snakebite, classified by WHO as a Neglected Tropical Disease, continues to pose a significant public health challenge

deaths have seen a sharp rise from 6,596 bite cases and 19 deaths in 2023 to 13,235 bite cases and 100 deaths in 2024 and 16,805 bite cases and 154 deaths in 2025.

Availability of ASV

Attributing the increase in number of cases recorded to increased surveillance, Padma M.R., Deputy Director (State Surveillance Unit) said this follows Karnataka declaring snakebite envenoming cases and deaths notifiable under the Karnataka Epidemic Diseases Act, 2020, in February 2024. The State Action Plan seeks to address these gaps through strengthened surveillance, assured availability of anti-snake venom (ASV), early referral and transport, capacity building of healthcare personnel, and sustained public awareness campaigns. Karnataka had earlier declared snakebite a notifiable disease, mandating reporting of all cases and deaths to improve data collection and guide policy response, Dr. Padma said.

The plan aligns with the National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAPSE), launched by the Union government in March 2024, and aims to reduce snakebite deaths and disabilities by half by 2030. It envisages coordinated action by multiple departments, including Health, Animal Husbandry, Agriculture, Forest, Panchayat Raj, Education, Labour, Finance and Home.

Key strategies

The Health Minister said key strategies include promoting behavioural change through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, encouraging rural communities to seek treatment at the nearest health facility instead of traditional healers, ensuring early transport of victims, prompt administration of ASV, management of complications and rehabilitation of those left disabled.

The Health Department has identified designated snakebite treatment centres, supplied ASV stocks and circulated standard treatment guidelines. Free treatment will be provided in government facilities. Private hospitals have been directed to administer immediate life-saving care without insisting on advance payment, he said.

Alongside SAPSE, the State rolled out SAPRE under the National Rabies Control Programme. Rabies was declared a notifiable disease in Karnataka in December 2022. The government has mandated the availability of Anti-Rabies Vaccine (ARV) and Rabies Immunoglobulin (RIG) in all Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, taluk and district hospitals, with instructions to maintain adequate stocks.

Private hospitals have also been directed to stock ARV and RIG and provide emergency treatment without demanding advance payment.

State- and district-level joint committees have been constituted to oversee implementation, in coordination with various government departments and non-governmental organisations.

A "Rabies-Free Cities Initiative" is being implemented in 11 major cities, including Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mangaluru and Hubballi-Dharwad. City-specific action plans focus on mass dog vaccination, dog population management, strengthened surveillance and improved waste management.

ASHA workers protest seeking honorarium hike and halt to retrenchment

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ahead of the State Budget, ASHA workers staged a protest at Freedom Park on Friday demanding an increase in honorarium and withdrawal of the proposed removal of nearly 7,000 workers under "rationalisation".

Leaders of the Karnataka Rajya ASHA Karyakarteyara Sangha said the Chief Minister had, during a protest in January 2025, assured them of a minimum monthly guarantee of ₹10,000 and a ₹1,000 hike. However, these measures for ASHA workers were not mentioned in the March 2025 Budget, and a manifesto promise to raise the honorarium from ₹5,000 to ₹8,000 remains unfulfilled, they said.

K. Somashekar, State president of the All India United Trade Union Centre to which the Sangha is affiliated, alleged that incentives had not been revised for years and criticised delays linked to payments

ASHA workers staging a protest at Freedom park in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

The sangha leaders warn of agitation if the Budget fails to address their demands

through the RCH portal. The union leaders opposed the "rationalisation" exercise, calling it arbitrary and against Central guidelines. The workers demanded a fixed monthly honorarium of ₹15,000 by combining State and Central shares, implementation of the promised ₹8,000 honorarium, retirement benefits, a medical corpus fund, and clearance of pending dues. Vasanthkumar, Director of Health and Family Welfare, told the protesters that proposals for a ₹1,000 hike, a medical corpus fund and recovery support had been submitted to the government.

The association warned of intensified agitation if the Budget failed to address their demands.

Open Day at Raman Research Institute today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The annual National Science Day celebrations at the Raman Research Institute (RRI) would be held on Saturday to mark Sir C.V. Raman's Nobel Prize-winning discovery of the Raman Effect.

To inculcate scientific temper among schoolchildren, the Open Day will be organised by the RRI, with students and staff across the institute putting together engaging programmes featuring experiments, scientific demonstrations, and a range of exciting activities.

The RRI said that the scientific display stalls would offer a glimpse into the institute's ongoing research across various groups and facilities, while also presenting key scientific concepts in interactive and accessible ways.

Students from government and private schools in Bengaluru and its surrounding areas are welcome to participate in the celebration. Admission to the general public is available. The institute added that multiple schools from in and around Bengaluru with a combined total of over 1,000 students have already confirmed their attendance this year, and visitors will be able to see scientific experiments across multiple stalls. The visitors can also interact with the RRI research scholars and engineers and take part in hands-on experiments.

Competitions were also being conducted as part of the celebrations, a fun way to explore science through quizzes, photography, and creative costumes.

The event will be conducted in two sessions from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Over 850 ex-servicemen participate in job fair

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Directorate General Resettlement (DGR), which organised a job fair for ex-servicemen on Friday, saw the participation of over 850 ex-servicemen and 51 leading national and multinational companies coming together to offer more than 780 employment opportunities across diverse sectors.

Major recruiters at the event included BEL, Genpact, Cemindia and Toyota Kirloskar Auto Parts among several other reputed organisations.

The BEL conducted on the spot written exam and 12 ex-servicemen have been shortlisted for the interview. The fair provided a valuable platform for the candidates to showcase their technical, managerial and administrative expertise, while enabling industry to access a disciplined, skilled and experienced talent pool. "The event further reinforced the DGR's commitment to facilitating meaningful second careers for veterans," the Ministry of Defence said.

The job fair was inaugurated by Lt Gen J.K. Gera, Comdt ASC Centre & College, along with Com. Vikrant Kishore, PD DGR.

National Art Camp revives living legacies; traditional artists mentor students

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

As 12th-generation artist Paresh Chitara speaks, a story unfolds of how an entire community turned art into a quiet rebellion against the barricades of caste nearly 300 years ago.

"Earlier, people of our community were denied temple entry as we were considered lower castes and untouchables. So, we started painting illustrations of the mother goddess on large pieces of cloth and started using them as our shrines," said Mr. Chitara, a Mata ni Pachedi artist from Ahmedabad.

Mr. Chitara, son of prominent artist Jagdish Chitara, along with his family, was in Bengaluru to mentor fine arts students from across the country at the National Camp on Indian Art, organised by Bengaluru-based non-profit Yuvaka Sangha, with the support of the Ministry of Education.

10 traditional styles

The art camp saw the participation of around 300 fine arts students from 17 States across the country. Organised in two phases, the camp aimed at training the students in 10 different traditional art styles, including Mysore Painting,

Participants taking part in the National Camp on Indian Art in Bengaluru. The month-long national camp drew to a close on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Paresh Chitara was in Bengaluru to mentor fine arts students from across the country

Kalamkari, Kerala Mural, Thanjavur Temple Mural, Chitrakathi, Madhubani, Mata ni Pachedi, Gond Art, Sattriya Painting, and Patta Chitra. "We chose the theme of *Panchatantra*. The 84 main fables of *Panchatantra* are being narrated on canvases," said Mahesh Krishnamurthy, project director at Yuvaka Sangha.

Gond art

Senior artists like Mr. Chitara, Gond artist Santu Tekam from Dindori in Madhya Pradesh, and manuscript artist Sujit Das from Nagaon in Assam, among others, who hail from families that have been practising the respective art styles for generations, trained the students.

Animal stories

"This is the first time we are working on narrating such long stories. The speciality of Gond art is the way it depicts nature and its elements. So, to narrate stories from the *Panchatantra*, which are essentially animal stories, it turned out to be a very suitable medium," said Mr. Tekam.

Bhavna, a second-year Master's student from Delhi, said that the camp helped her learn a different style of Madhubani art.

Madhubani painting

"Madhubani painting is practised in different villages, and each style has a different language. Previously, I have learned more technical versions. This time was a positively different experience," the student said.

The month-long camp concluded on Friday. The organisers said all the paintings would be digitised and selected works would be sent to Navodaya schools across the country, where they would be displayed.

Unidentified man booked for filming woman inside restroom

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Police have launched a search for a man who allegedly filmed a woman using the restroom at a well-known eatery in Malleswaram on Thursday.

The incident occurred between 7.30 p.m. and 8 p.m. when the complainant went to use the washroom at the eatery located on 17th Cross, Malleswaram.

After entering the restroom, she noticed a mobile phone placed over the partition wall between two cubicles. She immediately grabbed the phone and screamed for help.

An investigator in the case told *The Hindu* that the accused fled the scene as soon as the victim seized the phone, and a manhunt has been launched. The accused was reportedly inside the adjacent restroom and began filming by placing the phone over the partition wall after the woman entered the cubicle next to his.

The police siezed the mobile phone and would send it to the forensic science laboratory for further examination.

Uttar Pradesh Medical Supplies Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)
GSTIN: 09AACCU2250P1ZZ CIN: U85310UP2018SGC102425

Date: 26-02-2026

Tender Notice Invitation

Uttar Pradesh Medical Supplies Corporation Limited, Lucknow invites tenders on GeM Portal from eligible and qualified Manufacturer/Importer/Authorized Agent for supply of **following Medical Equipment's.** The schedules of Tendering activities are as here under:

Sr. No.	Tender Ref. No. & Date	Items Name	Date & Time of Pre-Bid Meeting	Last Date & Submission of Online Bids	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids
1	GEM/2026/B/7280138 Dated: 26-02-2026	Power Generator-DG Set (up to 900 KVA)	05/03/2026 at 3:00 PM in Conference Hall of UPMSCL, Lucknow.	19/03/2026 up to 15:00 PM	19/03/2026 at 15:30 PM
2	GEM/2026/B/7277613 Dated: 26-02-2026	Stacker	05/03/2026 at 4:00 PM in Conference Hall of UPMSCL, Lucknow.	19/03/2026 up to 18:00 PM	19/03/2026 at 18:30 PM
3	GEM/2026/B/7293406 Dated: 26-02-2026	Walk in Cooler	06/03/2026 at 4:00 PM in Conference Hall of UPMSCL, Lucknow.	19/03/2026 up to 15:00 PM	19/03/2026 at 15:30 PM

The details of tender notice are given on GeM Portal & UPMSCL website www.upmsc.in. Kindly check GeM Portal & UPMSCL website for any detail & updates.

Managing Director, UPMSCL

Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

LOSS OF NOTARIAL CERTIFICATE

I, **RAMESH D SHAH,** ADVOCATE & NOTARY PUBLIC have lost my Original Notarial Certificate bearing No.13219, (File No.N-11013/2000/2016-NC, renewed for five years w.e.f. 27/03/2022, issued by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice, Department of Legal Affairs, New Delhi. A Police Complaint has been registered vide Lost Report No.2085066/2026, dated 27/02/2026, Police Unit: Bengaluru City. Anyone in possession of the same may kindly return the same to the undersigned.

RAMESH D SHAH, B.COM., LL.B.,
ADVOCATE
No.1, 1st Floor, 4th Cross, Meenakshi Koil St., Cross, Shivajinagar, Bangalore-560051.
Mobile : 98453 28016
Bangalore Date : 27/02/2026

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Renu Bepadiyanda Ganapathi W/o Prasad Kulal R/at Ulluru 74, Kundapura, Udupi-576229 do hereby solemnly state that, as mentioned in his Passport (No.X4399337) **PRASAD KULAL** is my Husband's correct name. But in my Passport (No.R9103190) his name is wrongly mentioned as **TILAK**. I further, vide affidavit dated 27.02.2026 sworn to Notary, I request concerned authorities to carryout the necessary correction in my Passport.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of my client **SRI.GOVARDHAN.B, S/o Late.U.C.Bhyraiah,** aged about 40 years, to bring to the notice of the general public that the Original sale deed bearing doc.No.107/1987-88, in Book-1, Volume No.1088 at pages 95 to 98, dated:09.04.1987, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar Srirampuram, Bangalore, is lost.

If any person/s, firm, company, institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document, they shall return the same or contact the undersigned in writing within **07 days** from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.

SCHEDULE :

All the piece and parcel of the Property bearing New Municipal No.12, earlier situated at **5th Cross, Bapujinagar, Bangalore,** Measuring East to west : **15-0 Feet** and North to South : **40-0 Feet**, in all measuring **600 Square Feet** earlier Bangalore City Corporation Division No.21, then Division No.29, thereafter it was under the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, Ward No.134(42), Bangalore, now it is coming under the jurisdiction of Greater Bangalore Authority, Bangalore West City Corporation (BWCC), Ward No.134, Bangalore. As per the records of GBA, the Property bearing New Municipal No.12, **e-PID No.1538280876,** situated at **14th Cross, Bapujinagar, Bangalore** and bounded on:

East by : Private Property , West by : Donor's Property, North by : Remaining Property, South by : Road.

Raviprakash.H.C, Advocate,
#644/32, 6th Main, Vijayanagar,
Bengaluru-560040.
Mobile No : 9980052890 / 8660025758

DOCUMENTS LOST

I, Venkobarao R/at Metro Fashion Building, Mirza Road, Anekal Town, Bengaluru do hereby solemnly state that, I am the owner of the Property Bearing E-Katha No.19-18-31A, Property No.9/23, situated at Hoovadigara Beedi, Ward No.13, Anekal Town having Absolute Sale Deed No.2541/1963-64, Volume:983, dated 04.02.1964, registered at Anekal Sub-Registrar Office. I have lost this Absolute Sale Deed on 05.02.2026 and have raised a complaint with Karnataka State Police on 19.02.2026 and have obtained GSC No.PO1330260600332. I further state that above given details are true to my knowledge vide affidavit dated 18.02.2026 sworn to Notary.

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Tender Notice No. GEM/2026/B/7285174 dated-26.02.2026. DRM(M)'s office, Central Railway, Solapur on behalf of the President of India invites sealed tender from the reputed firms/contractors for the following work: **Name of work with its locality**: Contract work for Linen Distribution attendant in AC coaches of Primary Maintained trains of Solapur and Kalburgi coaching depot of Solapur division. **System of tendering:** Two packet system. **Approximate cost of work**: ₹ 3,95,18,815.84/-. **Cost of the tender form:** Nil **Address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased:** DRM(M)'s office, Central Railway,Solapur. **Earnest Money to be deposited:** ₹ 3,47,600/-. **Completion period of the work**: 1 years and 8 months from the date of commencement of the work. **Date and time for submission of tender: 20.03.2026 at 12.00 hrs. Date and time for Opening of tender: 20.03.2026 at 12.30 hrs.** Website particulars & notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen: **www.GeM.gov.in**

Akar/Sur-12 Sr. DME/Solapur

Travel safely, Avoid footboard travelling

Sculpting the spatial future

At India Design ID 2026 in New Delhi, recycled materials, French crystal mastery and a new generation of Indian studios redefined contemporary space

Designs at ID, New Delhi. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Anisha Menezes

Recycled PET bottle seats, French iridescent crystal orbs, benches that marry sabai grass weaving and teak carving, cashmere seats with cast brass ellipsoids for drama, sculptural lighting – these were just some of the design statements and material mastery on display at India Design ID 2026 in New Delhi. It ran in the penultimate week of February.

Some of the highlights at this edition, which celebrated Design Syncretism, included 'Design, Tomorrow', a special curation of *objet d'art* by festival director Misha Bains, the ColourNext pavilion by Asian Paints, and French mastery across lifestyle spaces. A few standout booths won applause for their imagination, with a truly Indian soul, and finally, The New Guard celebrated upcoming design voices.

The French quarter

Business France and the Embassy of France in India, with ID, presented French designers and Indian innovators across craft forms. H.E. Thierry Mathou, Ambassador of France to India, said, "Being held under the India-France Year of Innovation banner, the event combines the excellence of the French lifestyle industry with innovation to build ambitious and inspiring collaborations between our two countries." The curation was energetic and eclectic. Brilliant crystal by Baccarat, Daum and Cristal Benito, sophisticated sonic systems by Devialet, biophilic kinetic lighting by Lux Temporis and furnishing by Casamance & Misia shared space with Indian design studio Klove, a guest designer known for hand-blown glass lighting.

Bains observes, "When it comes to France, it is not the brand name but the designers who stand at the forefront. As for India, earlier we were considered a maker's market, but now India is a place where collaborations can happen, celebrating craftsmanship with a contemporary flair. We also have a strong presence at the symposium with co-curated talks with designers Vikram Goyal (architect) and India Mahdavi (designer) coming together."

Celebrating objects of singular bravery, both in materiality and scope, 'Design, Tomorrow' offered studios a space to spotlight Indian modernism married with traditional art forms. This year, Bains said she "wanted to display craft and design in a museum-like environment. Traditionally, if you talk about futuristic design, you think of space and technology. We wanted to define the future of design in terms of storytelling, by highlighting eco-conscious design, utilising and reusing resources from the POV of longevity." Each of the 47-pieces created was unique across materiality and encompassed lighting, tapestries, furniture, textiles, etc.

"The EcoLattice chair uses recycled plastic waste and bonded material to create a seat. You have a narrative of sustainability where Ariane Ginwala's studio, ThisandThat, has a beautiful bench celebrating traditional craftsmanship (teak carving with sabai grass weaving from Odisha). There is sustainability built into each craft in India, because it's from a particular region catering to daily needs, and craft is functional," Bains explains.

Misha Bains

Asian Paints celebrated craftsmanship, heritage and hope, with a future-facing design language at its ColourNext pavilion. The brand unveiled 'moonlit silk' as the colour of the year. A delicious shade of *amla* green, it is a return to nature and texture, and quite a departure from Pantone's monochrome 'Cloud Dancer'. The pavilion, also presented four design directions, each with its own curated space conceptualised and designed by Bengaluru-based Wari Watai. The curation by Asian Paints offered an idea of what Indian design can expect in the year ahead.'Pastoral' was a celebration of heritage, focusing on materials and traditions shaped over time, while 'Solarpunk' highlighted regeneration, resilience and a balance between nature and technology. The ColourNext pavilion balanced overstimulation with mindful presence in 'IRL', designed to spark conversations, by creating thoughtfully grounded environments, while 'Daydream', was an ode to fever dreams with playful forms, creating environments that feel comfortable, using transparency and gentle layering.

Gen-Next designers

An initiative to create a platform for Gen-Next designers, this pavilion was a look at how rooted Indian design branches out, finding new expression in modern aesthetics. "We created an open call for people to submit their projects and shortlisted six studios. A lot of them are very young, but they're reviving shapes and forms traditionally," explains Bains. "The response to our collection, especially the interactive wall, was exceptional. We met incredible people, explored exciting partnership opportunities, and walked away with fresh ideas for our upcoming collections," says Parth Parikh, founder of Design Clinic India. The chosen six studios celebrated Indian artisans using heritage craft with a contemporary syntax. Three studios from Ahmedabad: Umber Furniture Co. (co-founded by Niti Sehgal and Nandakumar S.S.) invoked intuitive design with traditional craftsmanship; the Hero Chair by Amolakh (founded by Amolakh, managed by grandson Maneesh Kumar Jangid) explored structural efficiency and extreme lightness; and Dhaaga Designs (co-founded by mother-daughter duo Mehal and Aashni Thakore) collaborated with artisan communities from Kutch, Bihar, Bengal Rajasthan and Gujarat to celebrate tactile richness of hand processes. Indore-based Spero Furniture, founded by Madhuri Rao, explored furniture as dialogue between alloy and wood grains and New Delhi-based Orikrit, co-founded by Deepti and Ayush Jain, reinterpreted folding through contemporary objects and lighting.

For Sharan Apparao, creative director, Apparao Galleries, three studios stood out. She explains, "Beyond Designs (velvet chateau), Nivasa (sophisticated vignettes) and Within (marble dust wall installation, traditionally built *objet d'art*) really shone with their maximalist presentation in a contemporary way. From woven walls, beautifully framed images, and expert finishing, they were impressive. Both art and accessories got good attention. I particularly liked Kohelika Kohli's booth, while Jaipur Rugs are really outdoing themselves (collaboration rugs with Princess Pea)."

The freelance writer is based in Chennai.

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THE HINDU
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From Page One

Shivakumar loyalists hold dinner meet

"Since I will not be in Bengaluru from Friday morning, as I am going out, I invited like-minded people for a get-together on Thursday. We invited everyone and organised the gathering," he said.

When asked about the purpose of the meeting, Magadi MLA Balakrishna said, "The discussion was that, in the present situation, if our party continues like this, it will be difficult for us to retain power in the 2028 election. The high command must take a final decision on the leadership issue. We have decided to urge the Congress high command to take a decision soon."

During the discussions, several MLAs expressed concern that unless the leadership issue was resolved, it would be difficult for them to function effectively and the party's future would remain uncertain, Mr. Balakrishna said.

Continued buzz around CM face

A few days ago, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, in his social media post, claimed that he was being "targeted" for reasons of his caste and social background, amid the ongoing leadership tussle between him and Mr. Shivakumar.

Earlier, Dalit Ministers had held dinner meetings to discuss issues concerning their community, with many leaders expressing their wish to see a Dalit leader occupy the Chief Minister's post.

Meanwhile, Mr. Siddaramaiah's son and MLC, Yathindra, has reiterated on several occasions that his father would complete the full five-year term and that there was no power-sharing pact within the Congress.

Why NK youth rely heavily on govt. jobs

Uneven growth and an inadequate educational ecosystem leave government jobs as the only ladder of mobility in backward regions

Kumar Buradikatti
KALABURAGI

Job aspirants staging a massive protest in the central business district of Dharwad recently. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The recent massive protest by government job aspirants in Dharwad has once again highlighted a deeper structural imbalance in Karnataka's regional development. For the protesting youth – who come from many parts of educationally and industrially backward regions in North Karnataka to Dharwad to enrol in coaching centres for competitive exams – a government job is not just one among several career options, but the only one.

Historically, these areas have lagged in industrial investment, private-sector growth, and large-scale infrastructure expansion. Unlike industrially advanced districts, where manufacturing units, IT firms, educational campuses, and service industries provide diverse employment avenues, backward regions often offer limited alternatives beyond agriculture, informal trade, and small-scale occupations. A government job is often the only route for economic and social mobility.

The Karnataka Regional Imbalances Redressal Committee (2026), headed by economist M. Govinda Rao, which submitted its report recently, said that both in terms of the numbers and the intensity of backwardness, North Karnataka has the largest concentration of backward taluks. It called Karnataka a "State of contrasts", with Belagavi division having the largest share (33.7%), followed by Kalaburagi division (26.1%).

Development economist Prof. Chandra Pujari attributes the widening regional imbalance to policy choices that concentrated on growth in a few urban centres.

He argues that Karnataka's industrialisation and service-sector expansion have remained overwhelmingly Bengaluru-centric.

Picture of contrast

"Large-scale industries, start-ups, IT companies, and much of the service economy are clustered in Bengaluru. A significant share of foreign direct investment flows into the capital and a few pockets in southern Karnataka. Bengaluru alone contributes more than 33% of the State's Gross Domestic Product. If a couple of forward districts such as Mysuru and Mangaluru are added, their combined contribution accounts for well over half of Karnataka's GDP. A similar disparity is visible in per capita income, with Bengaluru topping the list at around ₹7.39 lakh, compared to districts in Kalyana Karnataka where per capita income hovers below ₹1.5 lakh," he observes.

He points out that more than 80% of the rural population in South and Coastal Karnataka depends on non-agricultural sources of income.

In contrast, two-thirds of people in North Karnataka rely on agriculture.

"This structural imbalance affects income levels, educational quality, and exposure. The educational ecosystem in backward districts is not as robust, and students often lack access to skill-based training and industry linkages and limited exposure to campus placements," he says, explaining heavy reliance on government jobs.

Tourism potential

A crucial dimension of this imbalance is the uneven development of tourism as a source of employment. Regions such as Mysuru have built a robust tourism ecosystem around palaces, wildlife sanctuaries, heritage structures and cultural events. In contrast, vast stretches of Kalyana Karnataka and neighbouring districts with a rich historical legacy remain far from harnessing their tourism potential. The globally renowned World Heritage Site of Hampi in the Vijayanagara district stands as a notable exception.

Numerous sites of historical and archaeological value remain underdeveloped and inadequately promoted. The ancient Buddhist centre of Sannati in Kalaburagi district, Maski in Raichur district known for its Ashokan edict and prehistoric settlements, and several other potential sites have no tourism economy to speak of that can generate jobs.

Article 371(J)

Efforts to address regional imbalance, particularly in Kalyana Karnataka, have gathered momentum over the past decade. In 2013, the Constitution was amended to insert Article 371(J), granting Special Status to the region.

The provision enables reservation for local candidates in public educational institutions and government employment, and led to the establishment of the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB), with special grants.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Ajay Singh, chairperson of KKRDB, said 25% of the Board's allocation has been earmarked for strengthening education.

"We have declared the last two years as 'Education Years'. Under the Akshara Aavishkara scheme, 25% of the ₹5,000 crore grant is being utilised to upgrade government schools. This year, the government has sanctioned 100 Karnataka Public Schools (KPS) to the region, and KKRDB has added 200 more. Our focus is on improving educational infrastructure and prioritising skill development to enhance employability," he said, adding that the Board is supporting LKG and UKG classes in 1,008 of the 9,249 schools in the region.

Mr. Singh emphasised the need for separate industrial and agricultural policies tailored to Kalyana Karnataka.

"Large-scale industries will come only if competitive incentives are offered. Once industrialisation gathers pace and students are trained in industry-aligned skills, private-sector employment will expand, reducing dependence on government jobs," he said.

(Concluded)

Shivakumar appeals to MLAs not to visit Delhi on his behalf

The Hidu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Friday appealed to his party MLAs not to visit Delhi to lobby for his elevation to the Chief Minister's post.

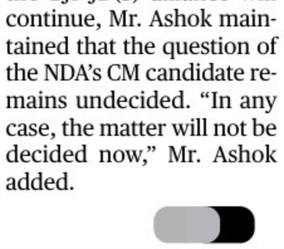
Responding to reports about a dinner meeting of his loyal MLAs and their plan to go to Delhi to urge the party high command on the leadership issue, Mr. Shivakumar said, "Please don't. If you have any issues – if you are aspiring for a ministerial position or seeking power or a post – then go and appeal for yourself. Do not go on my behalf".

Asked about the dinner meeting organised in the guise of MLA H.C. Balakrishna's birthday, where several MLAs discussed party matters in an attempt to demonstrate a show of strength, he said, "There was no show of power. Some go abroad for rest and study, some go to Delhi, and others attend dinner parties. These are personal matters and have nothing to do with the party."

On MLAs' statements suggesting that he should become the Chief Minister, Mr. Shivakumar said, "I am not aware of this. No one has spoken to me. Some have expressed their wishes. Newcomers have a desire to become Ministers. Leaders like G. Parameshwara, H.K. Patil, H.C. Mahadevappa, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and I are all seniors now. They became Ministers at a young age, and now the newcomers are aspiring for ministerial positions. Let's see, I will bring this matter to the attention of the leadership in Delhi".

'No decision yet on NDA's CM candidate'

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU



R. Ashok

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok has clarified that no decision has been taken on the Chief Ministerial candidate of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the State for the Assembly elections due in 2028.

When his attention was drawn to JD(S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy's assertions projecting his father and Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy as the next Chief Minister of the State, Mr. Ashok dismissed any talk on the CM candidate as premature. "Let us first win the elections," he said.

Speaking to reporters here on Friday, he noted that both the BJP and the JD(S) are constituents of the NDA. Any decision on the CM candidate will involve the alliance's leadership comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the party's national president, and the same will be binding on them.

Mr. Ashok said discussions were still under way on a possible alliance between the two parties for the upcoming elections to Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and other local bodies in the State.

He added that the BJP's GBA election in-charge had sought views of key State leaders, including himself, State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra, and senior leaders, including Union Ministers, on the proposed alliance. Irrespective of individual opinions, the party's State-level leaders will abide by the decision taken by the national leadership, keeping the country's interests in mind, he said.

While reiterating that the BJP-JD(S) alliance will continue, Mr. Ashok maintained that the question of the NDA's CM candidate remains undecided. "In any case, the matter will not be decided now," Mr. Ashok added.

Internal reservation likely to become a vexed issue in recruitment for 56,432 posts

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

Scheduled Tribe youth restive

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government, which, under pressure from public services aspirants, announced kick-starting one of the biggest recruitment processes for 56,432 posts with 50% cap on reservation, seems to be now torn between the Dalit groups over the issue of internal reservation. With the government deciding to revert to 15% reservation for the Scheduled Caste, providing internal reservation is likely to become a vexed issue.

A government source told *The Hindu* that recruitment and appointment as per 56% reservation and internal reservation would not be applied in view of the "High Court interim order".

The Cabinet on Thursday decided to revert to the 15% quota and the roster points to implement the quota that was in practice before the Karnataka Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or posts in the Services under the State) Act, 2022. The legislation that came into effect in 2023 enhanced reservations to the Scheduled Castes from 15% to 17% and for Scheduled Tribes from 3% to 7%. It is learnt that the Dalit Left (Madigas) Ministers K.H. Muniyappa and R.B. Thimmapur met internal reservation activists at Madigara Mahasabha on Friday, to allay fears over dropping of internal reservation within the 15% quota. Committing to the internal reservation, the two Ministers are learnt to have told the activists that a meeting of all Dalit Ministers to bring about a consensus on the issue will be held soon to arrive at an acceptable solution. Mr. Muniyappa is learnt to have spoken about the Congress government's commitment to internal reservation, without which recruitments will not be done. He has told them that legal advice, data, and reports of commissions will be considered before arriving at sub-classification. Mr. Thimmapur has assured that internal reservation will be part of the 15% quota and will be done proportionately.

The government's decision to go with 50% reservation quota has made the youth in Scheduled Tribes restive. The decision to bring down quota from 56% will affect the STs more as they are set to lose 4%. Taking into consideration the population of STs, their reservation had been hiked from 3% to 7%, which will now be reverted. The Ekalavya Vidyarthi Jana Parishath has said that it will start a movement against the reduction. "Not only will the reduction affect Nayakas, but over 40 small tribes dwelling in and around forests will be affected by the decision," a ST leader said.

Meanwhile, a top government source said, "As and when and if the High Court case is resolved in favour of government, we shall go for catchup recruitment of balance 6% posts of SC/STs".

While the Cabinet note reserved 6% jobs (2% for SCs and 4% for STs) since the reservation was scaled down from 56% to 50% pending the High Court decision, the note has remained silent on providing internal reservation within 15% quota. Incidentally, the Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Thursday gave his assent to the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-classification) Bill, 2025, which provides for a 6:6:5 matrix for Madigas, Holeyas, and Bhovi/Lambani/ Korma/ Korcha/ Nomadic tribes respectively in 17% reservation for SCs. Interestingly, reservations in educational institutions are being done for 56%, with internal reservation for SCs within 17%.

However, with the government deciding to adhere to the Supreme Court-mandated reservation cap of 50%, Dalit rights communities is learnt to be opposed to adjusting the internal reservation matrix within 15% reservation quota. "The new roster points based on internal reservation have already caused havoc, drawing ire and protest across the State by Dalit right communities," said a senior official.

Though an expert who was associated with the H.N. Nagmohan Das Commission that recommended internal reservation says it is possible to reduce the ratio in the internal reservation appropriately since the Governor has already given his assent, it has pointed out that the Assembly has to relook into the 15%. Dalit rights community leaders have said that it was legally not possible. A Cabinet Minister felt that 15% reservation was based on a different set of data obtained by the census for which rosters were fixed; it is not possible to slice the 15% for internal reservation without proper empirical work. The notifications for jobs that have been approved by the Cabinet could come without internal reservation, the Minister hinted.

Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and his son B.Y. Vijayendra, distributing sewing machines on the occasion of the BJP's veteran's birthday at Shikaripur on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

On his birthday, BSY vows to tour length and breadth of State to bring BJP to power

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Veteran BJP leader B.S. Yediyurappa was felicitated in Shikaripur on the occasion of him completing 83 years on Friday.

Responding to the felicitation, he remarked that he had the single aim of bringing the BJP to power in the State again by touring the length and breadth of Karnataka. Stating that he would make honest efforts to bring the party to power, he appealed to the party leaders to cooperate with him.

The former Chief Minister said he had the satisfaction of working for the development of oppressed communities. He maintained that the Bhagya Laksmi scheme implemented by him had brought light into the lives of crores of girl children.

Similarly, he had given importance to irrigation to ensure that farmers heaved a sigh of relief, he noted.

BJP State president and Mr. Yediyurappa's son B. Y. Vijayendra recalled that his father had worked as legislator eight times, besides being an MP and serving as Leader of the Opposition.

He thanked the people of Shikaripur by stating that they had introduced Mr. Yediyurappa to the country.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi and a large number of BJP leaders from across the State attended the felicitation programme.

'Tahsildars not adhering to timeline leading to flood of litigations in court'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Pointing out that the court is flooded with petitions seeking directions to tahsildars to enter names of purchasers of lands in revenue records, the High Court of Karnataka directed the Principal Secretary of the Revenue Department to ensure that tahsildars adhere to the timeline for changing names in revenue records in undisputed cases as per the time frame fixed in the Karnataka Sakaala Services Act, 2011.

The court directed the Principal Secretary to ensure that the notice boards in the office of the tahsildars should henceforth indicate the information regarding pending/disposed of applications in terms of the provisions of the Sakaala Act.

Justice R. Devdas issued the directions while allowing a petition filed by Annapurneshwari Builders and Developments, which has complained that Bengaluru North Taluk Tahsildar has filed to change the khata in their name since 2023. Pointing out that the time frame fixed for changing the name in the khata is 60 days (in undisputed cases) under the Sakaala Act, the court said that if the tahsildars do their duty in terms of the law, there is no need for the purchasers, who have acquired title over the land, to knock the doors of the court.

As tahsildar in the present case has not changed the name in khata from three years, the court said that it was surprised to note that the competent officers have failed to monitor the applications pending before the tahsildars, for not providing information on the notice boards in the offices of tahsildars on number of applications pending and disposed, and for not taking action against the tahsildars for failure to provide the services within the time stipulated in the Sakaala Act.

As the Sakaala Act has a provision to impose a cost, of ₹20 for every day's beyond timeline, not exceeding ₹500 on the officers who fail to dispose application within the time limit, the court said that it would in future start imposing cost on the State government for the failure of its officers in disposing of the applications by tahsildars within the prescribe time limit.

In the present case, the court imposed ₹500 cost on Bengaluru North Taluk Tahsildar, directing him to enter the petitioner's name within six weeks.

INBRIEF

Ex-Thiruvabharanam official gets bail in gold 'theft' case

Kollam Vigilance Court granted bail to former Thiruvabharanam Commissioner K.S. Baiju in the Sabarimala gold theft case on Friday. Judge C.S. Mohit granted statutory bail after the special investigation team (SIT) failed to file a chargesheet. Having previously secured bail in a related case involving the theft of gold from the temple's doorframe (Kattilappali), Baiju is now set to be released from prison.The court has imposed strict conditions for his release.

Probe under way into alleged online abuse of Telugu actor

The Cyberabad Police has begun questioning two of the suspects in the case involving alleged online abuse, sexual harassment and defamation of Telugu actress Anasuya Bharadwaj. The police on January 12, 2026, booked 73 persons as accused in connection with the case. A police officer said the investigation has been particularly demanding due to the number of accused and the absence of verified addresses of several of them.

3 of a family from Bengaluru killed in car accident in A.P.

A woman and her two minor children were killed after the car in which they were travelling collided with a crane coming from the opposite direction at Jagadurthi village in the Nandyal district of Andhra Pradesh on Friday. Her husband was critically injured in the accident. A police official said the family of four, all residents of Bengaluru, was on its way to the Srisailam hill shrine. Police have registered a case, and an investigation is under way.

HC Division Bench permits release of *The Kerala Story 2*

Order comes a day after a single Bench stayed the release; judges say that once censor board gives clearance, there is a presumption that it has considered all guidelines and judged the entire film

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Friday permitted the release of the Hindi feature film *The Kerala Story 2: Goes Beyond*, a day after a single Bench of the court issued a fortnight-long stay on its release.

The film was scheduled for release on Friday. The development came shortly after the two petitioners apprised the court that booking of the film's tickets was on, despite the stay order. The petitioners had approached the High Court earlier this month challenging the censor certificate for the film alleging its teaser and trailer portrayed Kerala in poor light.

The High Court permitted the film's release on Friday, while hearing an appeal by its producer, against the stay order. FILE PHOTO

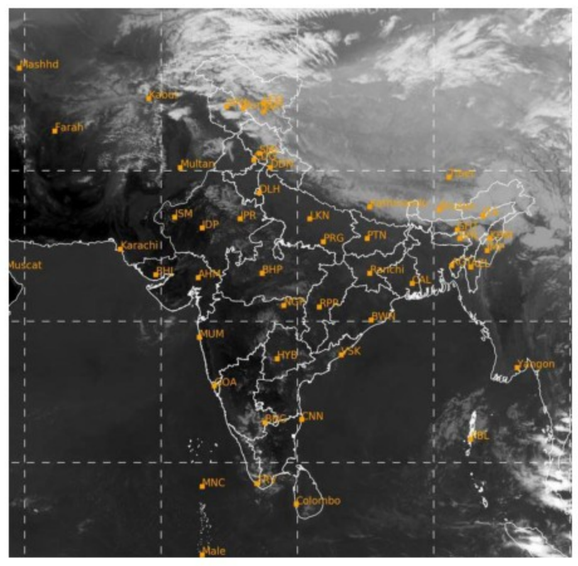
The Division Bench permitted the film's release on Friday, while hearing an appeal by its producer Vipul Amrutlal Shah against the stay order. In its interim order, the single judge had observed that the teaser had a prima facie potential to distort public perception.

In the order passed on Friday, a Division Bench of Justices Susrut Arvind Dharmadikari and P.V. Balakrishnan observed that the contents of the teaser (which the petitioners objected to) formed part of the movie. Censor guidelines prohibited the use of visuals or words contemptuous of racial, religious or other groups. "Once the certificate is issued, there is prima facie a presumption that the CBFC has taken into account all the guidelines. This presumption thus includes that the film has been judged in its entirety...," the court said.

In such circumstances, merely on the basis of a few clippings and without viewing the movie, the finding of the learned single judge that the certification guidelines have not been borne in mind by the CBFC while granting certification cannot be countenanced, the court said.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Saturday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning very likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Kerala, Mahe, Sub Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	31.4	17.0	Kozhikode	—	34.8	24.9
Ahmedabad	—	32.6	19.1	Kurnool	—	36.2	23.2
Aizawl	—	28.0	14.9	Lucknow	—	31.1	14.7
Allahabad	—	33.2	14.6	Madurai	—	36.0	24.0
Bengaluru	—	32.0	21.3	Mangaluru	—	22.8	33.5
Bhopal	—	32.0	15.4	Mumbai	—	30.4	20.2
Bhubaneswar	—	34.4	20.0	Mysuru	—	33.0	20.0
Chandigarh	—	29.3	12.8	New Delhi	—	31.8	12.8
Chennai	—	33.8	23.4	Patna	—	30.0	16.8
Coimbatore	—	33.3	23.2	Port Blair	5.0	30.5	24.0
Dehradun	—	28.5	13.6	Puducherry	—	31.9	21.0
Gangtok	0.6	11.0	9.8	Pune	—	34.6	18.6
Goa	—	33.8	21.4	Raipur	—	33.9	15.1
Guwahati	—	30.0	17.9	Ranchi	—	28.9	13.0
Hubballi	—	34.0	17.0	Shillong	0.1	18.8	8.5
Hyderabad	—	31.4	17.4	Shimla	—	20.2	9.6
Imphal	—	25.3	11.1	Srinagar	—	21.0	1.5
Jaipur	—	32.5	18.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.1	25.5
Kochi	0.4	31.0	25.8	Tiruchi	—	35.7	23.4
Kohima	—	18.6	10.6	Vijayawada	—	35.4	22.7
Kolkata	—	31.5	18.7	Visakhapatnam	—	32.0	23.7

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.73	..58	28	 89	...129	.....
Bengaluru	.25	..83	24	 50	.....--	.....
Chennai	...5	7	42	 97	...192	.....
Delhi	.12	..91	83	... 180	...195	.....
Hyderabad	.10	8	25	 50	98	.....
Kolkata	.27	..53	34	 96	...165	.....
Lucknow	...7	..36	61	... 159	...134	.....
Mumbai	.82	..70	--	 37	44	.....
Pune	.--	..78	78	 40	82	.....
Visakhapatnam	...8	..62	14	 54	87	.....

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Charkhi Dadri, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 288 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 23

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Groom 'killed by bride's family' after inter-caste wedding

T. Appala Naidu
MANDAPETA

Polipalli Surya Prakash, 41, was stoned to death by the family members of the bride at the former's residence on the midnight of Thursday at Dwarapudi village in Mandapeta Mandal in East Godavari district, hours after the duo entered into a wedlock.

The apparent reason is reportedly an inter-caste marriage. Mr. Surya Prakash and 40-year-old Ayanavalli Sandhya, who is serving as Deputy Collector, entered into wedlock on the Annavaram temple campus on Thursday. Later, the duo arrived at the house of Mr. Surya Prakash at night. The duo had been in love for over two years.

4 officers suspended for 'custodial torture'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Four police officers attached to the Fort police station in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, have been suspended following allegations of custodial torture that reportedly left one person with severe kidney damage.

The suspended officers include Grade Sub-Inspector Sreekumar, and civil police officers Sunil, Gireesh and Siju Kumar.

The accused, Jinu Baby and Unni, both natives of Kottayam, were arrested in connection with the theft of a motorcycle.

The duo were remanded on Saturday.

The custodial torture came to light during an investigation led by the Assistant Commissioner, Fort, with CCTV visuals confirming the assault.

Plea against Dileep's acquittal in rape case

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The State government has challenged the acquittal of actor Dileep and three others in the 2017 actor rape case before the Kerala High Court. It also sought enhancement of the punishment awarded to the other six convicts in the case.

The acquittal of Mr. Dileep and others by the Ernakulam Sessions Court was "illegal and contrary to the evidence on record. The judgment was illegal and unsustainable, and liable to be set aside and modified." The awarded sentence was "highly disproportionate and inadequate, considering the nature of the offences, the manner of execution, and the terror created in society," the government contended.

The convicts were awarded only the minimum punishment for gang rape and appropriate punishment was not awarded for some other offences proved against them, the State argued.

According to the State government, the trial court gravely erred in law and on facts and failed to "undertake a comprehensive and holistic evaluation of the prosecution evidence in its entirety" against all the accused who have been charged with the same offences for being members of the criminal conspiracy.

The trial court, which rightly found Pulsur Suni and five others guilty of the 11 offences charged against them, made no discussion regarding the role of Mr. Dileep, though the evidence adduced by the prosecution incriminated them equally... ," it argued.

Classical showcase

Graceful moves: A scene from Sita, a classical dance, traditional theatre and *Kalaripayattu* choreography directed by Belraj Soni performed at Chavara Cultural Centre in Kochi, Kerala on Friday. THULASI KAKKAT

Three arrested in separate theft cases

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In separate cases, the Bengaluru police have arrested three people for allegedly stealing from their employers' properties, and seized ₹81 lakh in cash and valuables worth ₹33.50 lakh.

In the first case, the Sadashivanagar police arrested two people for allegedly breaking into a real estate firm's office on BEL Road and stealing ₹91.76 lakh. The accused have been identified as Dhananjay and Praveen Naik.

According to the police, the firm's owner filed a complaint on February 20 stating that his office had been ransacked by unknown persons and ₹91.76 lakh in cash had been stolen. Acting on technical leads and tracking the car used by the accused, the police traced them to Shivamogga. On February 23, officers picked up Naik and questioned him about his involvement, which led to the revelation of Dhananjay's role in the theft. He was arrested the same day. Police investigations revealed that Dhananjay worked at the firm that was targeted and had tipped off Naik, his friend, about the cash kept in the office.

Naik allegedly arrived in Bengaluru with two others and broke into the office on February 19, stealing the cash from the counter. Dhananjay reportedly told the police that he wanted extra money, following which they planned the theft. The police are yet to recover ₹10 lakh and are searching for the two others who accompanied Naik during the break-in.

In another case, the Jeevan Bima Nagar police arrested a 32-year-old house help who allegedly stole gold and silver ornaments worth ₹33.50 lakh from her employer's house over a period of two years.

The accused has been identified as Chaitra, a native of Channagiri in Davanagere district. She had worked at the complainant's house for two-and-a-half years and had learned where the valuables were kept. "Recently, they suspected that several ornaments were missing and filed a complaint," an investigator said.

During interrogation, the accused reportedly confessed and led the police to the jewellery shop where she had sold the valuables. The police have recovered all the stolen ornaments.

Telangana CM meets surrendered Maoists

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy assured surrendered leaders and cadres of the proscribed CPI (Maoist) party that adequate security and rehabilitation benefits would be provided and the government would extend necessary support to enable them to live with dignity.

The Chief Minister on Friday met the recently surrendered top CPI Maoist leaders at their request. The Chief Minister held a face-to-face interaction with the former Maoists and congratulated them for joining the social mainstream after spending several years in the forests. He stated that violence cannot provide a lasting solution and that public aspirations can be addressed only through democratic means.

The former cadres thanked the Chief Minister and the government for facilitating their return to mainstream life. They also sought enhancement of relief and rehabilitation packages in line with policies implemented in neighbouring States. The Chief Minister assured to look into their requests.

The Director General of Police briefed Mr. Revanth on developments over the past two years concerning reintegration efforts in the State. He stated that 591 Maoists had reintegrated during this period.

Karnataka DGP issues Statewide Holi bandobast guidelines

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

All police units have been directed to implement preventive, intelligence-based and gender-sensitive policing measures

In order to ensure the peaceful celebration of the upcoming festival of colours and to prevent any mischief-mongering incidents, State police chief M.A. Saleem has issued a detailed memo to all unit heads, directing them to take stringent and proactive measures across Karnataka.

The Office of the Director General and Inspector General of Police on Wednesday issued a comprehensive memo outlining strict bandobast measures for the upcoming Holi festival across the State.

The directive said all police units have been instructed to implement preventive, intelligence-based and gender-sensitive policing measures to ensure peaceful celebrations.

The memo notes that Holi festivities typically involve large public gatherings, music, colour application, and celebrations, which may result in disputes, harassment complaints, intoxication-related nuisance, and communal sensitivities if not effectively regulated.

Women's safety
The DGP has directed all units to deploy adequate women police personnel in marketplaces, residential areas, educational institutions and major celebration points to prevent harassment and ensure visible deterrence. The police have been instructed to take strict action against eve-teasing, stalking and inappropriate touching, and to promptly register cases under relevant legal provisions.

Special patrol teams will be stationed near parks, lakes, malls, and other public congregation areas to ensure the safety of women and respond swiftly to distress calls.

Monitoring
Police units have been asked to identify communally sensitive areas and locations with a history of Holi-related disputes and deploy adequate preventive bandobast. Beat intelligence will be strengthened to detect early signs of mobilisation, provocative sloganeering, or attempts to disturb public order.

The directive also mandates activation of 24×7 Social Media Monitoring Cells to track inflammatory posts, communal narratives, fake videos, and provocative messages linked to Holi celebrations.

Strict regulation of music systems and public address systems, especially near religious places and sensitive localities, has been ordered in compliance with Supreme Court guidelines. Holika Dahan events must be conducted only at approved locations with proper fire safety measures in coordination with local authorities.

The police have also been instructed to intensify checks against the sale and consumption of illicit liquor and narcotic substances to prevent intoxication-driven misconduct.

Preventive measures
Preventive action will be initiated against known communal instigators and habitual offenders. Quick Reaction Teams and reserve forces will be positioned strategically to respond swiftly to any untoward incident, particularly those involving women's safety or communal tension.

Naka checking will be intensified to prevent unlawful assemblies and the movement of miscreants or hazardous materials. Videography coverage in sensitive areas and real-time reporting to senior officers have also been mandated, with accountability fixed for any lapses during Holi bandobast.

Bad publicity

The Delhi police's actions against the IYC protesters are heavy-handed

The India AI Impact Summit 2026, in New Delhi last week, was ostensibly a gathering of industry hands from global and Indian technology communities, and showcased to the general public to inculcate an awareness of the tech phenomenon that is already revolutionising economies worldwide. But the summit also revealed an unedifying aspect of officialdom and exhibitionism. This was evident when a private university participating in the convention falsely claimed a Chinese-made robot to be its own development. Or in how "VIPs" and various functionaries hogged the limelight and blocked product developers and AI enthusiasts from attending the summit on some days. Then there was a protest by some activists of the Indian Youth Congress (of the Congress party) who staged a non-violent "flash mob"-like protest against the India-U.S. interim trade deal. These events only reflected the underbelly of technological promotion in India and its politicisation, as both the BJP-led government and the Opposition sought to use the glare over the summit for publicity rather than public interest. Granted, the Congress party's use of the summit's media coverage and the venue to stage a protest was inappropriate. But the Delhi police, which arrested the activists in the protest, has also blown the actions out of proportion by registering charges that range from rioting, promoting enmity between groups, making assertions prejudicial to national integration, criminal conspiracy, unlawful assembly and common intention. The flurry of arrests also triggered an unprecedented standoff between the Delhi and Himachal Pradesh police following the detention of some of the activists in Shimla.

Too often in recent years, officials in the Union government and BJP-led State/UT governments have treated even peaceful dissent as crimes that are equivalent to riotous and violent actions. This has been the case in the arrests of student activists dissenting communally coloured actions of these governments such as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, with many charged under draconian laws and held without trial just for peaceful protest. The BJP-led governments have sought to demonise dissent and muzzle opposition by civil society forces and the Opposition. It is difficult not to read the charges framed against the Youth Congress activists in the same light. It hardly needs stating that dissent is a vital component of democracy, especially in a country that won freedom through acts of dissent and nonviolent protests. The police must desist from filing unrelated and outrageous charges against the activists and courts adjudicating on such cases of dissent – including those against the Youth Congress activists – must quash these FIRs forthwith.

Up in the air

Flights by non-scheduled operators need better enforcement

A series of flight incidents within a month – two crashes involving small aircraft, at Baramati (Maharashtra) in January, and near Simaria (Jharkhand), and a helicopter crashlanding in the Andamans – is a reminder that charter aviation in India cannot be treated as a lightly regulated adjunct to commercial flying. The troubled charter aviation sector is expanding and the need for oversight has become critical. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) website lists 133 non-scheduled operators, or NSOs (updated till September 30, 2025), using a mix of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft. The meeting on February 24 that the DGCA held with all NSO permit holders was thus long overdue. The proposal to rank charter operators based on safety performance and the requirement for NSOs to disclose critical safety information on their websites, which covers aircraft age, maintenance history, and pilot experience, could be the first steps towards basic transparency. Equally significant is the DGCA's line that commercial considerations must not be allowed to affect safety, a pointer to pressures to prioritise VIP schedules and even business commitments. The regulator's focus on maintenance standards, particularly among operators with in-house maintenance, repair, and operation facilities, is another critical, but late, intervention. Cockpit voice recorder audits, fuel records and ADS-B data scrutiny as well as enforcement of flight duty time limitations are pivotal, though belated, steps. Most importantly, holding senior management accountable for systemic failures is another corrective measure.

Adverse weather has been a contributory factor in several charter and non-scheduled flight accidents, which includes the Bell 430 helicopter crash in Andhra Pradesh in 2009 and the Beechcraft C-90 King Air accident in 2001 that claimed the lives of prominent political leaders. The DGCA has specified that recurrent training of pilots must focus on 'weather awareness strategies and decision-making in uncontrolled environments'. The rollout of safety audits, with a physical workshop on safety, may help align all operators with the safety mandate. However, the fact is that there are some operators with poor safety records. There are also gaps in pilot training and experience on type, scant simulator training centres in India, a dearth of quality instructors and weak audits. It is acknowledged that the regulator itself is short-staffed in certain safety critical departments. Earlier this month, the Civil Aviation Minister spoke of conducting a "very thorough study" of flight operations by non-scheduled operators and to uncontrolled airfields. But for such a safety drive to lock into place there has to be consistent enforcement and committed transparency.

Kerala's paradox can spark its global vision

Shashi Tharoor

is the fourth-term Member of Parliament (Congress) for Thiruvananthapuram (Lok Sabha), a member of the Congress Working Committee, and the award-winning author of 28 books

Long before "globalization" became the lingua franca of Davos economists, Kerala, sandwiched between the verdant Western Ghats and the cerulean Arabian Sea, was practising it with cosmopolitan flair. History whispers to us from the excavations of Muziris, where the clinking of Roman sesterces once drowned out local Malayalam dialects. The Chinese, Arabs, Jews and Europeans all arrived in pursuit of our spices and textiles, creating a syncretic civilisation where church bells, the muezzin's call, and temple chants harmonised into a symphony of coexistence.

Switch from remittance to innovation

This indomitable spirit has metamorphosed into the "Global Malayalee". From the oil rigs of the Middle East to the boardrooms of Silicon Valley, the Keralite is omnipresent, constructing a "Remittance Economy" worth an estimated ₹1.3 lakh crore annually. We are the super-expats of the 21st century. But the challenge for Kerala is to transform this "Remittance Economy" into an "Innovation Economy". For too long, Kerala's economic discourse has been entrapped in a futile exercise of self-flagellation, comparing ourselves to our neighbours, wondering why we cannot replicate the automobile factories of Tamil Nadu or the industrial belts of Maharashtra. But this ignores the crucial truth: Kerala is an anomaly. We are a State boasting first-world social indicators amidst third-world infrastructure pressures, possessing the population density of the Netherlands (901 per square kilometre), the literacy of Singapore (96.2%), and the ecological fragility of Costa Rica. To try to force-fit the heavy industrial models of continental India onto the delicate geography of Kerala is an error of imagination. Our future does not lie in competing with Chennai or Mumbai for smokestacks; it lies in looking outward, across the seas, to the small States that have turned their constraints into competitive advantages.

Kerala is already the nursing capital of the world; we must now aspire to be its healing garden. Our demographic reality – we are the fastest aging society in India – presents us with a unique paradox that is also an opportunity. Leveraging our unique genetic admixture – a blend of Dravidian, Aryan, Arab, and European markers – we must move beyond general health care to precision medicine. Like Iceland, which utilised its population data to drive biotech, we can establish a "Gene Valley", mapping disease risks and drug responses specific to diverse populations, transforming our diverse heritage into a scientific asset.

Why should we import 80% of our medical devices when we possess the engineering talent to create them? We must look to Costa Rica, a small nation that became a med-tech powerhouse. By leveraging institutions such as the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute, we can manufacture high-value components – stents, heart valves, and surgical robots – for the world. We already are a leading State in blood-bags.

The State must look across the oceans to chart a bright future

Furthermore, we must cease viewing our aging population as a liability and recognise it as an economic engine. By emulating the Japanese model and developing "retirement villages" in our climate-friendly highlands, we can offer world-class assisted living not just for locals, but for the "grey nomads" of the West. Additionally, we must elevate Ayurveda from "wellness" to "cure", much like China successfully globalised Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) through scientific validation. By combining our 1,200 species of medicinal plants with modern diagnostics, we can position Kerala as the "Sanatorium of the East".

One of Kerala's greatest, yet most neglected, assets is its biological gene pool; as one of the world's eight "hottest hotspots" of biodiversity, we house approximately 5,679 species of flowering plants (2022-23 data). With no land to spare for low-yield crops, we must adopt the Dutch model of glasshouse farming. The Netherlands is the world's second largest agri-food exporter despite its diminutive size because it prioritises technology over territory. By focusing on climate-resilient local varieties, such as the saline-tolerant Pokkali rice, and vertically extracting high-value spice oleoresins, we maximise revenue per inch.

Possibilities by the ocean side

We must stop being hunter-gatherers of the sea and become farmers. Like Norway, we should lead in sustainable salmon and shrimp farming and extracting pharmaceuticals from marine algae, while investing in deep-sea fishing fleets and cold storage managed with scientific rigour. The Vizhinjam International Seaport is our gateway, but a port without value addition is merely a parking lot. We must look to Singapore and construct a logistics city that refines, assembles, and repackages goods, transforming Vizhinjam from a transit point into a global economic anchor. We can also be the gas station of the Indian Ocean; like Chile, we can use our solar and wind potential to produce green ammonia for the ships docking at our ports, fuelling the maritime fleets of the future.

Since heavy industry is ecologically unviable, our path to prosperity lies in the "weightless economy" – sectors requiring high intellect but low physical footprint. We are the Toulouse of India; with the legacy of VSSC, LPSC, and IIST – Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre and Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology – Thiruvananthapuram is already a space citadel. We must encourage private startups, creating a commercial "space coast" for nano-satellite launches and propulsion systems. Similarly, the presence of Brahmos should be leveraged to set up auxiliary defence production. We must emulate Manchester ("Graphene City") by turning our rare earth minerals (ilmenite, monazite) into the microchips and superconductors of tomorrow. The India Innovation Centre for Graphene in Kochi is merely the seed; we must grow the forest.

Given our financial literacy and an economy fuelled by global remittances, we need a regulatory "sandbox" in a Global FinTech Centre, similar to the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), to attract the world's crypto and fintech pioneers. Furthermore, like The Hague or Singapore, Kerala can become a venue for international commercial arbitration, leveraging our legal expertise and the serene "peace dividend" of locations such as Kumarakom to settle global corporate disputes at a fraction of London's cost.

The change begins here

"God's Own Country" is a brilliant slogan, but scenic beauty is no longer enough; the modern traveller craves immersion and activity. We can be the Montreal of Asia, utilising our vibrant cinema culture and artistic youth to become the post-production back-office for Hollywood and Bollywood, offering tax credits to attract global gaming studios and VFX houses/visual effects studios. We must pivot from selling handicrafts to selling "heritage luxury". Consider the Aranmula Kannadi or the exquisite Balaramapuram handloom; currently, these are marketed merely as curiosities for tourists. We must look to Italy's Tuscany or France's Lyon – why must a Kasavu saree be mere attire when it can be couture? We need to establish a "Kerala Design Institute" partnering with Milan or Paris to elevate our master craftsmen into designers, exporting not just the cloth, but the brand. Imagine a global luxury brand based on Kerala's eco-friendly hand-woven textiles, utilising the narrative of "sustainable luxury".

Finally, we must turn our climate vulnerability into expertise. Like the Dutch, who sell their water management engineering to the world, Kerala can become a "living lab" for disaster-resilient infrastructure, exporting low-cost, flood-resistant housing and soil stabilisation technologies to the tropical world.

The path forward requires a psychological shift. We must cease asking, "How do we catch up with Bangalore?" and start inquiring, "How do we collaborate with Amsterdam? How do we compete with Colombo? How do we learn from Kyoto?" Kerala has historically served as a bridge between the east and the west. It is time we ceased being merely a bridge – and started being the destination. A destination where the best of the world is adapted, improved, and offered back to humanity with a distinctly Malayali touch.

International law is not dead, its rules stay resilient

Prabhash Ranjan

is Professor and Vice Dean (Research), Jindal Global Law School

Rising tensions between the United States and Iran, with threats of the use of force, have once again triggered a debate on the utility of international law. International relations scholars are writing obituaries of international law, arguing that one should brace for a norm-free world. This precarious argument started with the Russian invasion of Ukraine (2022), followed by Israel's military actions in Gaza and West Asia. Donald Trump's presidency, the recent illegal American actions in Venezuela, the U.S.'s withdrawal from numerous international organisations, and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's astute observation of 'rupture' in the global order have given this thought a fillip. While it is true that international law is undergoing one of its darkest phases, pronouncing its death is not just merely intellectually lazy but also misleading.

Use of force

Let us take one of the most fundamental international norms – the prohibition on the threat or use of force in international relations, enshrined in Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter – as an example to understand this. It is true that this norm has been breached many times in recent years, but it has not been unprecedented. In 1970, international lawyer Thomas Franck argued that Article 2(4) had died because of wars around the world, owing to the Cold War rivalry between the U.S. and the then Soviet Union. In the past four decades, the U.S. and other powers have been involved in several wars, including the Soviet-Afghan war (1979-89), the Falklands war (1982), the Gulf war (1990-91), and conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), Syria, and Libya in the 2010s. All these wars, like the wars and military attacks in the last few years, battered Article 2(4); they could not kill it. The law continues to exist and remains the only normative framework for holding the powerful accountable.

Proclaiming the death of international law aids world tyrants

As Columbia professor Monica Hakimi argues, when international relations are legalised, those wielding public power are compelled to explain their conduct using the framework of international law. The claims that they make about authority will resonate with people only when their actions are grounded in domestic and international rules. Related to this is the point that international law is the only framework that gives the powerless a semblance of agency to ask questions to those wielding public power. A world without such a normative framework would be far more dangerous.

Still, today's breach of Article 2(4) differs qualitatively from the past. In the past, powerful states justified their use of force by employing the analytical framework of international law, demonstrating that even hegemons needed this normative framework. This left open a prospect of dialogue and deliberation. So, in the 1990s and 2000s, the U.S. legally expanded the interpretation of self-defence – an exception to the use of force – to justify its military actions. Whether the American legal interpretations were correct or merely a tool to mask its imperial designs is debatable.

In today's populist-authoritarian world, there is brazenness. A scarce attempt is made to justify behaviour as per international law, and the imperial designs stare in one's face. The U.S.'s repeated insistence on Venezuelan oil drives home the point. It is this rising populist-authoritarianism that poses the greatest threat to international law, not the act of a military strike or invasion itself.

Looking beyond the use of force

Concurrently, it would be a mistake to reduce the entire body of international law to the UN Charter. While the UN Charter is undoubtedly a critical pillar, it does not by itself define the legalisation of international relations that has occurred over the last eight decades. Today, international law is widespread and diverse, governing international trade, foreign investment, civil aviation, maritime resources, outer space, human rights, climate change, chemical and biological weapons, and many other areas. This, as Yale professor Oona A. Hathaway argues, means that international law is flourishing as a social phenomenon.

International law works silently

International law-making continues unabated, as evidenced by the conclusion of free trade agreement negotiations between India and the European Union. In recent years, key treaties such as the High Seas Treaty (aimed at the sustainability of marine biological diversity), and a Pandemic Agreement (to strengthen pandemic prevention), have been signed. Over the years, hundreds of international courts, at global (such as the International Criminal Court) and regional levels (such as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights), have been created, demonstrating the judicialisation of international relations. These courts, away from the limelight, continue to resolve complex international law disputes peacefully.

In sum, as international lawyer Philippe Sands reminds us, much of international law operates silently and seamlessly behind the scenes, despite the media-grabbing headlines about breaches of the UN Charter. This silent international law enables goods and people to cross borders, and communication networks to transcend national geographies, positively impacting the lives of ordinary people. Just as one does not abandon a liberal constitutional order due to an authoritarian regime running amok, one should fight to preserve the existing liberal international law order against the global bullies. Pontificating on the death of international law only plays into the hands of the global bullies.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Court, textbook ban

The decision of the Supreme Court of India to ban an NCERT published Class 8 textbook for 'selective reference' about 'corruption' in the judiciary signals a troubling contraction of democratic pedagogy. Students must be enabled to understand how public institutions function in practice, reconciling constitutional ideals with structural vulnerabilities and ethical decay. Education that interrogates deficits while demonstrating lawful corrective mechanisms cultivates a resilient and participatory citizenship. Judicial impropriety is no longer speculative, as the discovery of burnt currency notes at the residence of a judge of the Delhi High Court. A former Chief Justice of India has also talked about 'maintaining judicial legitimacy and public confidence'. Transparency, institutional accountability and principled reforms are indispensable to restoring judicial legitimacy.

N. Sadhasiva Reddy,
Bengaluru

Chepauk's enduring glory

The hallowed Chepauk cricket ground has been witness to many classic battles. Two such events were, first, the famous tied Test in September 1986, where history was re-written moments after Australia's Greg Matthews trapped Maninder Singh LBW on the evening of the last day. And, second, India's agonising defeat against Pakistan in January 1999 when victory was in sight. ("Chepauk and its colourful legacy of delivering classics", February 26). The Test against Pakistan is still remembered for Sachin Tendulkar's heroic 136, battling back spasms, and for the excellent crowd behaviour despite India's loss; fans gave the Pakistan players a standing ovation during their victory lap. It is no surprise that Ravi Shastri has waxed eloquent about the Chepauk crowd, calling it the "most knowledgeable".

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

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A beach in Arambol, North Goa. SURAJ GAWADE

A double murder in 'mini Russia'

The killing of two women in January, both named Elena, reopens old questions over foreigners' deaths in Goa. **Sujay Gupta** visits Arambol, a fishing village in North Goa, known for playing host to performers, sunset-seeking international travellers, and beach front bars. Running in the background are the stories of victims of alleged murders, whose families from overseas are still fighting for justice

It took a cat to pull the man accused of a double murder out of the bag.

In these parts of Goa, where the days start with *dobre utra*, Russian for good morning, not much shakes the slow pace. The sea, witness to a changing world across Morjim, Ashwem, Mandrem, Arambol, and Querim – five villages across about 16 kilometres in North Goa – caresses the fragile coast. Coffees and salads are ordered from menus in Russian.

In this cocoon, which envelops the sweet-water lake in Arambol, the hilly goat tracks in the surrounding jungles, and the hundreds of rooms, hostels, and apartments, people got a jolt between January 14 and 17. In Goa's 'mini Russia', two 34-year-old Russian women, both named Elena, were allegedly killed by a Russian man they knew.

Double murders

The first murder was discovered when Sergei, a Russian resident of Goa, received a call from a friend who was worried because she had not heard from their mutual friend, Elena Vaneeva, who had been looking after her cat. Elena was not taking calls on the morning of January 17. Sergei then went to the bubble artist's apartment in Morjim, about 10 km from Arambol, only to find her almost-naked body in her bathroom, with her throat slit.

Through their network of local informants, the police arrested a Russian man, Leonov Aleksei. He had, for three years, been part of the travelling performer scene: a fire-display artist who worked shows along Goa's beach circuits.

The police say Aleksei knew the victims and had been in a live-in relationship with them at different times. Investigators say that one of the women had borrowed a crown – an item used by fire performers – that belonged to Aleksei and had not returned it. The police have cited this claim as a source of tension between the parties.

Aleksei, the police say, then made an announcement that rattled them: there was another body – that of Elena Kasthanova, a go-go dancer who performed at night clubs, weddings, and events. He took the police to her house in Arambol, where her naked, decomposing body was found outside her bathroom.

Kasthanova had arrived in Goa on December 24, say the Goa police. She lived a few steps away from Rehab Social, where musicians and other artists perform. Aleksei had spent the night of January 14, the Old Russian New Year, there. In North Goa, parties are advertised to start at 10 p.m. or later, even though the government prohibits loud music after that time.

Investigators say the detained man's account includes a claim that he hated women named Elena, linking it to childhood neglect because his mother had the same name; as well as admissions to killing several others. Beyond this, the Superintendent of Police, Sheikh Saleem, who also holds charge as the Deputy Superintendent of Police of Mapua sub division, says, "We are investigating."

Deaths and déjà vu

In January, Goa was still fresh from the December 2025 fire at the now-shut nightclub Birch by Romeo Lane, in Arpora, 18 km from Arambol. It had killed 25 and injured about 50. Investigations threw up a combination of reasons: failures in licensing and enforcement, a flouting of basic safety norms, and administrative collusion.

> The dual burden of loss and fighting the system in Goa is a weight only a grieving mother can understand.
>
> **MINNA PIRHONEN**
> Mother of Felix Dahl

Beyond the irregularities of the construction mafia, the public that flocks to the nightclubs of North Goa for a weekend of excesses, and the murders of the women, are the stories of foreign nationals who died in Goa.

Police records obtained under the Right to Information Act, 2005, show that between 2003 and 2015, at least 245 foreign nationals died across four coastal police jurisdictions in Goa: Anjuna; Pernem (where Morjim and Arambol, the scene of the recent double murder, are located); Mapusa; and Canacona in south Goa. These areas account for a significant share of the State's tourist activity.

Of these, 157 deaths were classified as natural or accidental, six were recorded as murders, 39 were listed as "not known" or pending determination, 23 were categorised as drownings, and 20 as suicides.

While official records show only six cases as murders, case histories indicate that some deaths classified as natural or accidental have been challenged, with courts ordering re-investigations.

The last recorded death of a foreign national in Goa, where there was foul play, was in 2017 when a 28-year-old Irish woman was sexually assaulted and killed. A man was convicted in 2025 for it. While the deaths of the two Elenas in January 2026 were registered as murders, the parents of at least 10 others who died before 2017 say investigations have been short of expectations. While some cases have been closed for the lack of evidence unearthed by the police, families of victims feel a sense of being done in by the system.

In May 2017, up to 10 families of deceased foreign tourists banded together and wrote to the Prime Minister of India seeking a Supreme Court-monitored or independent inquiry into the deaths of foreign nationals in Goa since 2005.

Signatories argued that several cases had been classified without exhaustive forensic reconstruction or looking at alternative possibilities.

The house where Elena Kasthanova lived in Arambol. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Dahl and Sweeney cases

On January 28, 2015, Felix Dahl, 22, from Finland, was found dead on a quiet road in Patnem, Canacona. His death was initially recorded by the local police as an accidental fall with head injury.

Dahl's mother, Minna Pirhonen, a biologist and university lecturer, challenged this conclusion, convinced that the extent and pattern of injuries could not have resulted from a simple fall. She arranged a second autopsy in Finland, which concluded that the injuries were more consistent with a violent assault than an accident, as per a court document.

The Goa police submitted in court that Dahl's death was a result of "acrobatics like static jumping and cartwheels on the rocks at Agonda".

Following the initial police closure of the case, Pirhonen wrote at least three letters to Goa's senior police officials, the Chief Minister, the Director General and the Inspector General of Police, urging them to reconsider the homicide angle.

"The dual burden of loss and fighting the system in Goa is a weight only a grieving mother can understand. The emotional exhaustion was obvious. And this was because – and I have said it before in the media – that instead of investigating the murders and killings, the local police wanted to cover up the truth," says Pirhonnen.

She adds that if she had more resources, she would fight till her dying day. So far, she has spent €30,000-40,000 on legal fees, but has never come to India, because she was advised that the country is not safe.

In November 2017, the Bombay High Court at Goa gave the State government a "last opportunity" to justify the handling of the probe and urged action on Pirhonen's petition seeking transfer of the investigation.

In July 2018, the High Court ordered the transfer of the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), ruling that the Goa Police's probe was "not indicative of a fair and impartial investigation" and that the homicide possibility had been "wilfully ignored".

The High Court criticised the police's conclusion that Dahl had died from a fall while doing acrobatics. The explanation, the judges said, could not account for "multiple life-threatening skull fractures". They asked why alternative theories were never properly examined. After five years, in April 2023, the CBI filed a closure report before the Canacona judicial magistrate citing "lack of evidence" to prove homicide or any other charge beyond the original classifications.

Dahl's family, led by his mother, opposed the CBI's closure report in the Canacona magistrate's court, asking the court to order a new or continued investigation rather than accept the CBI's closure. No final judicial decision disposing of that challenge has been reported publicly as of early 2026.

Pirhonen says, "The reconstruction of the scene was conducted after changes had occurred at the site, which raises concerns about its reliability. We also feel that the High Court's earlier observations regarding the possibility of violent force were not sufficiently addressed."

The case of Denyse Sweeney, a 34-year-old Irish national found dead in a guest house room in Candolim in North Goa in 2010, has frequently been cited by families and activists who contend that suspicious foreigner deaths in the State are too quickly classified as accidental or drug-related. Local police initially treated Sweeney's death as a suspected drug overdose, with early reports pointing to substance consumption as a likely cause. Her family, however, disputed that conclusion, questioning the speed of the classification and the adequacy of the forensic process.

Sweeney's mother, Margaret Sweeney, became the most persistent voice seeking a deeper investigation, telling Irish and international media that her daughter had no history of drug abuse and challenging the overdose narrative. The family sought access to post-mortem findings and clarity on toxicology results, arguing that early assumptions had shaped the direction of the probe. Moreover, later inquests outside India found no conclusive evidence of illegal drug consumption sufficient to definitively support the overdose claim.

For Margaret Sweeney, the campaign extended beyond her daughter's case, forming part of a broader demand that deaths of foreign nationals in Goa be investigated with the same scrutiny, urgency, and institutional seriousness expected in jurisdictions in Europe.

Moving on

It was the death of Scarlett Keeling, a 15-year-old British national found on Anjuna beach in February 2008, that became one of the most internationally scrutinised criminal cases in Goa. The police initially treated the death as a case of accidental drowning.

However, sustained efforts by her mother, Fiona MacKeown, a single mother who then lived on a campsite in Devon, led to a second post-mortem examination, which concluded that the teenager had been drugged and sexually assaulted before her death. The second autopsy stated the presence of drugs in Keeling's system, signs consistent with sexual assault, and that the cause of death was not consistent with drowning alone. These findings led the police to reclassify the case as rape and murder. In 2016, a Goa trial court acquitted both Samson D'Souza and Placido Carvalho of charges including rape and culpable homicide not amounting to murder. Both were cleared due to insufficient evidence.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) appealed the acquittal to the Bombay High Court (Goa Bench). In July 2019, the High Court overturned the trial court's acquittal of D'Souza and convicted him of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, rape-related counts, and other offences. He was sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment. It upheld the acquittal of Carvalho due to lack of sufficient evidence against him.

The case has since been cited in discussions on investigative standards, the preservation of forensic evidence, and the challenges of securing convictions in cases dependent largely on circumstantial proof.

Vikram Varma, the Goa-based lawyer who represented MacKeown, says the outcome reflected shortcomings at the initial stage of the investigation. "The initial classification as drowning led to delay. The crime scene was not secured as it should have been, and there were gaps in the forensic handling and medical documentation. Once the chain of circumstances is weakened at the beginning, it becomes extremely difficult to sustain a conviction at the appellate stage, where the standard is proof beyond reasonable doubt."

Trajano D'Mello, a Trinamool Congress leader, who has closely followed and commented on these cases, says, "The police, as is seen, is all out to protect accused local Goans. The attempt to dismiss these cases as drownings or drug overdose is therefore obvious."

Responding to this charge, Bosco George, a retired IPS officer, says: "In very few cases, the Goa Police might tacitly delay or not pursue leads where local Goans are accused or suspected to be involved in foreigner's deaths. But they would not go out of the way to botch an investigation to protect a local because of media scrutiny."

Goa moved on after the Keeling case. As it has now. A month after the killings of the two Elenas, the belt is fully in business. Late-night parties at clubs around Arambol Lake are still advertised.

What remains, consistent with all these cases, are the scattered lives of the families of victims, who have not found closure. In January 2025, Dahl's mother, in a Facebook post wrote, "He was killed in Goa in January 2015. Since then, 10 years have passed without justice because authorities in Goa have been covering the crime to this day."

Her sister Sanna Cutter, who had fought for justice for Keeling, seven years before she lost her nephew Dahl, says she is tired and does not want to speak about it any more.

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From Page One

Kejriwal, 22 others walk free in excise policy case

Hailing the verdict, Mr. Kejriwal said that "truth has triumphed". Hitting out at the PM and BJP, he said that for the first time in the history of independent India, a sitting CM was dragged to jail and kept there for six months in a false case.

"The court has now said that Kejriwal is staunchly honest and the Aam Aadmi Party is staunchly honest," said Mr. Kejriwal breaking into tears of relief.

Throwing a challenge to the BJP, he added that he would quit politics if the party won even 10 seats if fresh elections are conducted in Delhi.

'Evidence tampering'

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that the people of Delhi had already given their verdict in February 2025 by voting Mr. Kejriwal out of power. "This decision of the lower court was taken due to the lack of evidence. We all know how evidence was tampered with [in the liquor policy case], how over 150 phones were destroyed," she said.

Mr. Kejriwal had spent five months in jail while Mr. Sisodia was incarcerated for 17 months in the case. They were granted bail by the Supreme Court in September 2024, months before the Delhi Assembly election, in which the AAP lost its majority in the capital for the first time in 10 years.

The case stems from a complaint lodged by Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena, who alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of Delhi's excise policy in 2020.

The initial FIR was lodged by the CBI. In the chargesheet, which runs into thousands of pages, the agency alleged that irregularities were committed while modifying the excise policy, undue favours were extended to licence holders, licence fees were waived or reduced, and the L-1 licence was extended without the competent authority's approval. The beneficiaries of the alleged scam diverted their "illegal" gains to the accused officials and made false entries in their books of accounts to evade detection, it said. Later, the Directorate of Enforcement also booked the accused on money laundering charges.

Pak. bombs Kabul, declares 'open war'

The overnight operation was Pakistan's most widespread bombardment of the Afghan capital and its first air strikes on the southern base of the Taliban authorities since they returned to power in 2021. Relations between the neighbours have plunged in recent months, with land border crossings largely shut since deadly fighting in October that killed more than 70 people on both sides.

Islamabad accuses Afghanistan of failing to act against militant groups that carry out attacks in Pakistan, which the Taliban government denies.

Most of the attacks have been claimed by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a militant group that has stepped up assaults in Pakistan since the Afghan Taliban returned to power. Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif declared an "all-out confrontation" with the Taliban government. "Now it is open war between us and you." Taliban government spokesman Mujahid said Afghanistan wanted "dialogue" to resolve the conflict.

Several rounds of negotiations between Islamabad and Kabul followed a ceasefire brokered by Qatar and Turkey, but the efforts have failed to produce a lasting agreement. After repeated breaches of this truce, Saudi Arabia intervened this month, mediating the release of three Pakistani soldiers captured by Afghanistan in October.

Iran, which shares an eastern border with Afghanistan and Pakistan, offered on Friday to help "facilitate dialogue", while the Saudi Foreign Minister spoke with his Pakistani counterpart and China said it was "working with" both countries while calling for calm.

New GDP series updates FY26 growth to 7.6%

The government also released the GDP growth data for the third quarter of 2025-26 based on the new series, which stood at 7.8% as compared to 8.4% in the second quarter and 6.7% in the first quarter.

Growth in the current year

According to the second advance estimates for 2025-26, the secondary sector is expected to grow at 9.5%, up from 7.3% in 2024-25. This growth is to largely be driven by the manufacturing sector, which is estimated to grow 12.5% in 2025-26 as compared to 8.3% in the previous year. The construction sector is set to grow at 6.9%, down from 7.1% over the same period.

Notably, the primary sector is expected to see a significant slowdown, with growth expected to be 2.8% in 2025-26 as compared to 5% in the previous year.

This is due to growth in the agriculture sector being expected to slow to 2.5% in 2025-26 from 4.3% in 2024-25, and in the mining and quarrying sector to 5% from 11.2% over the same period.

The tertiary sector, comprising the services sector, is expected to see growth quicken to 8.9% in FY26, up from 8.3% in the previous year. This is a result of double-digit growth in the trade, hotels, transport and communication grouping (10.3%), and the financial, real estate, IT, and professional services grouping (10%).

NCERT asks public to return Class 8 textbook, delete posts

Advisory comes a day after the Supreme Court banned a Social Science textbook that had a section on 'corruption in judiciary'; it also seeks the removal of any comments on social media

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after the Supreme Court banned a Social Science textbook over a section on "corruption" in the judiciary, the National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) on Friday asked people to return the book and take down related social media posts.

The NCERT reiterated that it had withdrawn the Class 8 textbook.

In its advisory issued on Friday, the NCERT called for any "individual or organisation" in possession of the book or any material related to it to return it to the Publication Division of the Department of Education in Social Sciences in New Delhi "at the earliest possible". Anyone who had posted any material related to the controversial section on social media or online should delete it, it said. The statement was issued by the office of Himanshu Gupta, Secretary, NCERT, and cited the Supreme Court order in this regard.

The NCERT is tasked with developing curriculum frameworks, publishing textbooks and conducting research. FILE PHOTO

Suo motu case

The Supreme Court registered a *suo motu* case on Wednesday in relation to the section that had appeared in a chapter titled "Role of Judiciary in Our Society". Chief Justice Surya Kant called the section on "corruption" in the judiciary a "selective reference", while calling for a *suo motu case* to be registered.

On Thursday, while hearing the case, the Supreme Court directed that copies of the book that had already been distributed or sold be seized, further asking officials concerned to file a compliance report regarding this seizure.

Soon after the Supreme Court heard the issue on Wednesday, the NCERT issued a public statement apologising for the "inappropriate textual material" and "error in judgement" that had "crept into" the said textbook. A day later, as the controversy intensified, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan expressed regret and noted that a direction had been issued to withdraw the book as soon as the material was noticed. Government officials claimed that the direction was issued on Tuesday, a day after the book was released.

Sources added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also taken notice of the section in question and called for accountability to be fixed. Mr. Pradhan told reporters on Thursday that action will be taken against those found responsible.

Modi is steering indoctrination campaign: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Court must institute an investigation into how textbooks have been rewritten, says Jairam Ramesh

The Congress on Friday sharpened its attack against the Centre over the controversy surrounding a Class 8 social science textbook published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), alleging that Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself had "guided and shaped" a "systematic indoctrination campaign".

In a post on X, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh said the next logical step for the top court was to start an investigation into how these textbooks came to be rewritten.

Mr. Ramesh's social media post came after reports that the Prime Minister was upset about the contentious section, and wanted to fix accountability.

"Over the past decade, he has presided over a network of academic-quacks who have done grave damage by infecting textbooks with their brand of ideological virus. These are not accidental oversights but part of a systematic indoctrination campaign. Mr. Modi has himself guided and shaped the Nagpur Communal Ecosystem for Rewriting of Textbooks – which is the real NCERT," the Congress leader alleged.

He claimed it was "sheer hypocrisy" on the Prime Minister's part to distance himself and his government from the NCERT controversy.

"The next logical step for the Supreme Court to take is to institute a full-fledged investigation into how textbooks have come to be rewritten and how they have become instruments of polarisation and political score-settling," Mr. Ramesh added.

Tribal Affairs Ministry set to revamp forest rights cells, form 'one-stop' coordinating units

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

A year after the Tribal Affairs Ministry started a programme to fund Forest Rights Act Cells (FRA cells) to aid the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, the government has decided to expand the mandate of such cells at the State- and Union Territory-level, *The Hindu* has learnt.

Funding of FRA cells was introduced as part of the Ministry's DAJGUA programme to help States with additional human resources and expedite the processing of forest rights claims, besides helping in record-keeping and digitising existing records of forest rights titles.

Till last June, the Ministry had sanctioned 324 district-level cells in 18 States and U.T.s, and 17 cells at the State level.

In a review meeting with States on February 4, the Ministry moved to create 'one-stop' Project Monitoring Units (PMUs) that would coordinate on all policy matters, officials said. The move has created confusion among several States implementing the FRA, which have already formed FRA cells.

Last week, the Odisha government ordered closure of existing FRA cells in 50 sub-divisions, a move an official confirmed as being part of the Ministry's revamp plans. Officials in Chhattisgarh said the State is figuring out how to form PMUs and exploring if existing FRA cells can expand functions beyond the Act's ambit.

'Increasing costs'

A Ministry official said provisions to fund cells exclusively for FRA implementation were "increasing costs" and made challenging communication with the States on implementing policies.

With the updated policy, each State and U.T. will have a PMU comprising four officials – for FRA support, livelihood support, IT and MIS expertise, and one other assistant or team leader. Under PMUs, there will be two experts in each district for FRA support and one MIS expert for coordination.

"Separate cells for each policy were creating challenges in coordinating the work and so it was thought that it will be simpler and faster for policies to be implemented if one unit was set up to coordinate on all policies," the official said, adding that States were briefed in the February 4 meeting.

Officials said several States expressed apprehensions about shutting down existing FRA cells but were told about their temporary nature.

Jaykumar Rawal, Minister of Protocol, Maharashtra, welcomes Mark Carney and Diana Fox Carney upon their arrival in Mumbai. AP

Canadian PM Carney lands in Mumbai for four-day India visit

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney landed in India on Friday as he hopes to reset ties and double trade, offsetting the damage from his country's fracturing relations with the United States.

Mr. Carney landed in Mumbai, where he is expected to address business leaders. The Canadian Prime Minister will be travelling to New Delhi and will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday. Mr. Carney will also meet External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, and there will be an exchange of MoUs. He will also address the India-Canada CEO Forum.

During the visit, Mr. Carney is expected to focus on India-Canada trade negotiations for a comprehensive economic partnership agreement.

14 students arrested in JNU protest case get bail

Ashna Butani
NEW DELHI

Following their arrests on Friday morning after a protest on Thursday, 14 Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) students including three Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) office bearers, have been granted bail and will be released after verification of their permanent addresses. The JNUSU issued a statement saying that since the students are originally from outside Delhi, the process of verification becomes the "process of elongating the imprisonment".

On Thursday, hundreds of students protested at the call of the JNUSU and tried to march to the Ministry of Education but were halted at the main gate. Among their demands were the resignation of the JNU Vice Chancellor over "casteist" comments made during a podcast interview earlier.

'From drudgery to systematic working, women's role in agriculture is changing'

Subramani Ra Mancombu
NEW DELHI

Inaugurating *businessline*'s fifth Agri and Commodity Summit in New Delhi on Friday, Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi said women's role in agriculture is changing from drudgery to systematic working, but more needs to be done to bring real transformation to the rural economy.

More women have become members of farmer-producer organisations (FPO) due to change in land laws, he said. Women need to be further empowered by ensuring availability of basic amenities across all sectors.

"Initially, in agriculture, land laws did not give women the ownership of rural land. But now, most States have changed their laws, and most women are getting the ownership of land," he said at the summit, which was on the theme 'Women – Pillar of Rural Economy'.

(from left) K.V. Shaji, Chairman of NABARD; Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, and Raghuvir Srinivasan, Editor of *businessline*, at the Agri and Commodity Summit in New Delhi on Friday. BIJOY GHOSH

In his special address, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) chairman K.V. Shaji identified important structural shifts that should happen, among them the formal recognition of women as farmers.

Stating that almost 50% of the rural workforce in the agricultural sector comprises women, he said the government has come up with several initiatives so that women can own farms.

Women play a key role in dairying, the value of which has exceeded that of grains, pulses and other crops, said Brahmani Nara, executive director, Heritage Foods. "Women are the guardians of nutrition and nourishment," she said in a fireside chat with *businessline* Editor Raghuvir Srinivasan.

Sanjiv Kanwar, managing director, Yara South Asia and country head of Yara India, taking part in a discussion on 'Silent Architects of the Rural Economy' said that almost 50-70% of women farmers do not have land titles in their name.

Ajay Kumar Jha, deputy general manager, product development and marketing, State Bank of India, called for motivating women farmers to migrate up the value chain.

'Lakhpati Didis' Aruna Debbarma from Tripura and Vaishali Ghuge from Maharashtra, said they need better markets and structured support for women self-help groups (SHGs).

NABARD was the presenting sponsor of the summit, while the associate sponsors were Yara India, Indofil Industries Ltd, Bayer, HURL and Markfed Punjab. State Bank of India was the banking partner, and Agri Network Consultancy the media partner.

Meghalaya steps up meningococcal disease surveillance

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

State govt. issues advisory urging people to avoid crowded places, follow protocols

Days after two Agniveer trainees died of suspected meningococcal bacterial infection at a training centre in Shillong, the Meghalaya government issued an advisory urging people to avoid crowded places and follow health protocols.

One of more than 30 trainees at the Assam Regimental Centre died at the Military Hospital Shillong a week ago. Another died on February 23, while the others, who have been quarantined, are under medical observation.

The advisory issued on Thursday by Joram Beda, Health and Family Welfare Commissioner-Secretary, said the East Khasi Hills District Surveillance Unit has initiated an active epidemiological investigation.

"Case investigation, contact tracing, laboratory review, and surveillance strengthening measures are currently underway," the advisory read.

The government assured the public that the situation is under close monitoring and is under control, with no new suspected cases detected in any other area. It said all necessary public health measures, including identification and monitoring of close contacts and implementation of appropriate preventive interventions, are being carried out as per standard outbreak response protocols.

Modi, Shah fabricated scam to seize power in Delhi: Kejriwal

AAP chief says BJP eliminates political rivals who cannot be defeated in elections; accuses probe agencies of surrendering integrity; challenges Modi to hold fresh polls in Delhi; alleges that Delhi's condition deteriorated after BJP came to power

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah of launching a political conspiracy to destroy the party and seize power in Delhi by "fabricating" the "so-called liquor scam".

Addressing a press conference after a special court discharged him and other leaders in the case, Mr. Kejriwal challenged Mr. Modi to hold fresh elections in Delhi and said that he would quit politics if the BJP won more than 10 out of the 70 seats. The BJP had won 48 seats in the Assembly election in 2025, ending the AAP regime.

Attacking Central investigative agencies, which he said were working on a "political agenda" by compromising their professional integrity, Mr. Kejriwal said: "The special court's verdict has thoroughly exposed the BJP's dirty politics of eliminating its political rivals that they could not otherwise have defeated in elections in the people's court."

Booster shot: Arvind Kejriwal arriving at the AAP headquarters after getting relief from the court in the liquor policy scam case in New Delhi on Friday. R. V. MOORTHY

Calling for clean politics, Mr. Kejriwal said that owing to the BJP's tactics to gain power, the three crore people of Delhi had suffered the most. "PM Modi and Amit Shah's lust for power has made Delhi suffer. They have tried everything to end Kejriwal. The only thing that is left is to kill me. But I have another alternative. If they want power they should gain it by doing positive work," Mr. Kejriwal said.

He added that since the BJP came to power, the condition of Delhi had deteriorated rapidly. "I challenge PM Modi, if you have courage, hold fresh elections in Delhi. If you win more than 10 seats, I will quit politics. The people of Delhi are fed up with you," he said.

Mr. Kejriwal said that he had earned nothing but honesty in his life and that the court's verdict had vindicated that the AAP was a party of honest people. "In an order of nearly 600 pages, after examining all evidence and witnesses, the court has said there is not even a tiny piece of proof to conduct a trial," Mr. Kejriwal said.

Explaining why he had become silent after coming out of jail, Mr. Kejriwal said that he had decided that until he was proven innocent before the country, he would remain silent. "Today a huge burden has been lifted from my heart. The court has proved that the AAP is *'kattar imaandar'* (staunchly honest)," Mr. Kejriwal said.

In a statement, the AAP said the verdict strengthened the party's resolve to march forward with its "honest pro-people" politics. The party would not be cowed down by any attempts to browbeat it, no matter how powerful the enemy may be, it said.

Court order exposes misuse of investigative agencies for political ends: Opposition

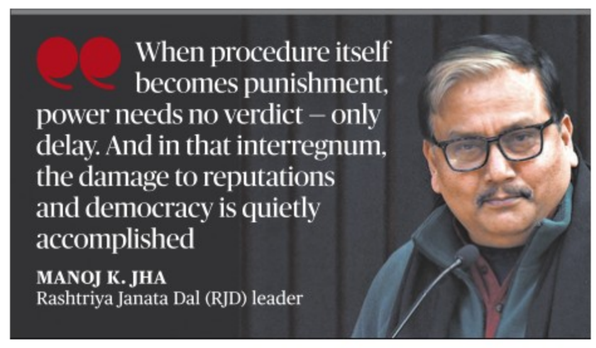
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Several Opposition leaders on Friday said the discharge of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia in the Delhi excise policy case had exposed "the misuse of investigative agencies for political ends".

Reacting to a Delhi court's refusal to take cognisance of the CBI chargesheet, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said it was a "moral death sentence" for the BJP. He accused the BJP government of betraying the Delhi voters by foisting a false case on Mr. Kejriwal and other AAP leaders.

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Manoj K. Jha said prolonged legal processes were being used as a form of punishment in themselves.

"When procedure itself becomes punishment, power needs no verdict – only delay. And in that interregnum, the damage to reputations and democracy is quietly accomplished," Mr. Jha said.



The Communist Party of India (Marxist) also launched a sharp attack on the Modi-led government, accusing it of "weaponising" Central agencies. In a post on X, the CPI(M) said the discharge of Mr. Kejriwal and Mr. Sisodia after years of investigation and incarceration showed that the alleged liquor "scam" was driven by political vendetta rather than evidence.

"After years of fabricated charges, prolonged incarceration and vicious smear campaigns, the courts have discharged Kejriwal and Sisodia, proving no conspiracy or criminal intent existed beyond a vendetta-driven witch-hunt against Opposition voices," the CPI(M) said.

Congress leader Pawan Khera went further, saying that the BJP used investigative agencies as part of its electoral strategy rather than for enforcing the law.

Describing the BJP as a "shape-shifter" driven by an obsession to achieve a "Congress-*mukt* Bharat", Mr. Khera claimed that the ruling party selectively accelerated or slowed investigations depending on electoral considerations. He alleged that cases against Congress leaders would gather pace ahead of elections, while proceedings involving parties seen as tactically useful to the BJP would recede.

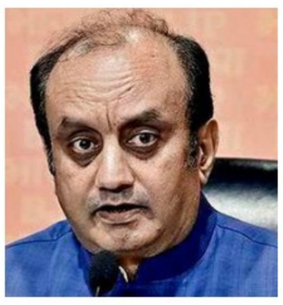
Discharge of AAP leaders a 'miscarriage of justice': BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday said the trial court's decision in the excise policy case, in light of the record so far, raised serious concerns and was a "miscarriage of justice". Whether it would withstand scrutiny in higher courts remained to be seen, it said.

At a press conference, BJP MP and spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the court let off the accused persons, including former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, "due to lack of evidence".

"It is also true that many SIM cards and phones were destroyed. With what intent was that evidence destroyed? What has led to this lack of evidence? It is a technical matter, the CBI will take the next step," he said, adding that the BJP would give a structured response to the development after studying the judgment in depth.


Sudhanshu Trivedi

On Mr. Kejriwal's charge about a political conspiracy against the Aam Aadmi Party and its leaders, Mr. Trivedi accused Mr. Kejriwal of hypocrisy. He said after making fake claims, Mr. Kejriwal had in the past apologised in the Supreme Court, and to several leaders, including BJP leaders Nitin Gadkari, late Arun Jaitley and former Congress leader Kapil Sibal.

"He has apologised to many people...the people of Delhi have given him a political reply [by ousting the AAP in the last State Assembly polls] on political grounds," he said.

BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya posted on X: "On February 27, 2026, a Delhi court discharged former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia in the Delhi liquor excise case. This order, in light of the record so far, raises serious concerns and is miscarriage of justice."

He said while denying bail, the special CBI court had previously observed that Mr. Sisodia had played the "most important and vital role" in the criminal conspiracy and was deeply involved in the formulation and implementation of the policy to achieve the objectives of that conspiracy.

In another post, he said whether the judgment withstood scrutiny in higher courts remained to be seen.

Kavitha hails order, criticises family for not supporting her

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruthi president K. Kavitha said she emerged as a "spotless pearl" in the Delhi liquor policy case, while also criticising her family for not supporting her during her difficult phase. She was among the 23 people discharged by a Delhi court on Friday.

"The court made it clear that the very arguments in the case were false. We welcome the clean chit given to all those named in the case," she said.

Reacting to a post on X by her brother and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao following the verdict, Ms. Kavitha said that while he congratulated her, he also appeared to suggest that the liquor case was the reason for the defeat of the BRS in the Assembly [2023] and Parliament [2024] elections. "Trying to put the burden of the party's defeat around my neck will not be welcomed by the people," Ms. Kavitha said. She argued that the BRS lost due to unmet promises like jobs and double-bedroom houses, the allotment of ticket to alleged exploiters, and what she called arrogant leadership.

Kalvakuntla Kavitha

She questioned why no senior leader, including her father K. Chandrashekar Rao or Mr. Rama Rao, held a press conference when she was jailed.

We did not pay influencers to oppose AI Summit: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday dismissed allegations that it had paid Instagram influencers to criticise the recently held AI Summit, calling the charge a "fabricated story" originating from the BJP's IT Cell.

Addressing a press meet, Congress social media department head Supriya Shrinate said that neither the party nor the Indian Youth Congress had made any payments to influencers to oppose or malign the summit.

"It was falsely alleged that the Congress party and the Indian Youth Congress paid Instagram influencers to oppose the AI Summit. We categorically deny this. No one was paid, and this claim is completely false," she said. She said that a "witch-hunt" had been carried out against the party on the basis of misinformation.

Odisha Police
Office of the D.G & I.G. of Police, Odisha, Cuttack
Tel. : 0671-2304001, Website :www.odishapolice.gov.in , Email : aig-prov.odpol@od.gov.in

RFP No. 42-RFP- SIM Card with Data Pack - 2025-2026 Date : 26.02.2026

Online Bids through e-Tender Portal **https://tendersodisha.gov.in** are invited from the eligible bidders for Supply of SIM card with Data Pack for Odisha Police, Odisha, Cuttack, during the current financial year 2025-26 as per the schedule mentioned below.

Sl.No.	Name of Item	Approximate quantity
1.	42-RFP- SIM Card with Data Pack -2025-2026	5000 Nos

Events	Date
RFP Issue Date	26.02.2026
RFP Submission Due Date and time	06.03.2026 at 11.00 AM
Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids	06.03.2026 at 03.00 PM
Bid to RA enabled	Yes
Tender Document fee **{(Non-refundable Rs.590/-(Rs.500/-+ 18% GST (Rs. 90/-)}**	In favour of A.I.G. of Police (Prov.), Odisha, Cuttack payable at Cuttack. (Demand Draft)
EMD (Earnest Money Deposit) **Rs: 4,80,000/- (Four lakh eighty thousand only)**	In favour of A.I.G. of Police (Prov.), Odisha, Cuttack payable at Cuttack. (Demand Draft)

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites : https://tendersodisha.gov.in . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

A.I.G. of Police (Provisioning), Odisha, Cuttack.
(Tender Calling Authority)

12001/38/2526 OIPR-12001/12018/1/25-26/0005

Office of the Principal, Veer Chandra Singh Garhwali Government Institute of Medical Science & Research, Srinagar (Garhwal), Uttarakhand.
Phone: 01346-244701

E-mail: principalvcsg@gmail.com
L.No. MC/interview/2025-26/5915

Website: vcsgsrinagar.org
Date- 27/02/2026

"Walk-In-Interview"

A Walk-In-Interview for the following vacant posts of Veer Chandra Singh Garhwali Govt. Institute of Medical Science & Research, Srinagar Garhwal will be **held on 23-03-2026 (Monday) 10:00 AM onwards in the "H.N.B. Uttarakhand Medical Education University, New Central Hope Town, Bhayakhala, Seshambara, Dehradun"** Registration will be done on the day of Interview till 01:00 PM only. The Posts will be filled on yearly renewal contract basis for a maximum period of 03 (Three) years or till regular appointments are made.

Designation	Department wise details
Professor (12)	Forensic Medicine-01, Community Medicine-01, General Medicine-01, Respiratory Medicine-01, Psychiatry-01, ENT-01, Emergency Medicine-01, Radiodiagnosis-01, Cardiology-01, Urology-01, Nephrology-01, Plastic Surgery-01.
Associate Professor (32)	Physiology-01*, Biochemistry-01*, Pathology-01*, Blood Bank-01, Microbiology-01*, Pharmacology-01, Forensic Medicine-01, Community Medicine-01, General Medicine-03, Dermatology-01, Paediatrics-02, General Surgery- 03, Orthopaedics-01, Ophthalmology-02, Obstetrics & Gynecology-02, Radiodiagnosis-01, Radiotherpy-01, Anaesthesia-01, Emergency Medicine-01, PMR-01, Neurosurgery-01, Nephrology-01, Cardiology-01, Urology-01, Plastic Surgery-01.
Assistant Professor (48)	Anatomy-02*, Physiology-02*, Biochemistry-01*, Pathology-01, Blood Bank-01, Microbiology-01, Pharmacology-01, Forensic Medicine-02, Community Medicine-02, Statistician-01, General Medicine-05. Respiratory Medicine-01, Dermatology-01, Paediatrics-04, General Surgery-04, Orthopaedics-03, ENT-02, Opthalmology-01, Obs & Gynecology-03, Radiodiagnosis-01, Radiotherpy-01, Anaesthesiology-02, PMR-01, Neurosurgery-01, Nephrology-01, Cardiology-01, Urology-01, Plastic Surgery-01.
Lady Medical Officer (01)	Urban Training Health Center-01.

Emoluments:
1- Professor - Rs. 2,25,000/- Per month+MTDCS** (Rs. 71500/-)= Gross: 2,96,500/- Rs. + (Ann. increment Rs. 6,000/-) Per year
2- Associate Professor - Rs. 1,65,000/- Per month + MTDCS** (Rs. 61500/-) = Gross: 2,26,500/- Rs. + (Ann. increment Rs. 6,000/-) Per year
3- Assistant Professor - Rs. 1,25,000/- Per month + MTDCS** (Rs. 47500/-) = Gross: 1,72,500/- Rs. + (Ann. increment Rs. 3,600/-) Per year

**** Medical Teachers Deficiency Compensatory Scheme: As per G.O. No. 79293/XXVIII(5)/2022-(E-22311) Date 28/11/2022.**

Eligible Qualification:- For Emergency Medicine as per NMC (TEQ) Regulation 2022: MS(General Surgery), MS (Orthopedics), MD (General Medicine), MD (Respiratory Medicine), MD (Anesthesia).
Note:- (1) Only MD/MS Candidates Shall be considered for faculty position in all Pre-Clinical and Para-Clinical Specialties.
Emoluments for Super Specialist & Radiodiagnosis only:- As per G.O. No - 236506/XXVIII(5)/2024-(E-52419) Dated:- 02 September, 2024 and Letter No 3554 /चि0शि0/03(मेडिकल)/246/2014 दिनांक 16/05/25.
1- Professor - Rs., 4,40,000/- Per month + (Ann. increment 7%) Per year.
2- Associate Professor - Rs. 3,50,000/- Per month +(Ann. increment 7%) Per year.
3- Assistant Professor - Rs. 2,50,000/- Per month + (Ann. increment 10%) Per year.

Age & Qualification - As per NMC norms. Reservation - As per Uttarakhand Government. Accommodation: As per availability/House Rent.
No TA/DA will be admissible for attending the interview. The chairman Interview committee reserves the right to accept/reject any application without assigning any reason. Number of Posts advertised may be increased or decreased as per requirement. Candidate must bring their resume along with original MBBS, MD/MS degree, medical council Registration certificate, Basic course in medical education technology including AETCOM, BCBR-basic course in biomedical research, Experience certificate, NOC (From Present working Place) and Undergraduate/ Postgraduate teaching certificate, 02 Recent passport size color photographs and a set of Photocopies thereof.

Principal/Dean
VCSGGIMS&R
Srinagar Garhwal.

President Droupadi Murmu and Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh before a sortie in 'Prachand' at the Jaisalmer Air Force Station on Friday. PTI

President undertakes sortie in Prachand

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday undertook a sortie in the indigenously developed light combat helicopter, Prachand, at the Air Force Station in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

Ms. Murmu flew in the lead aircraft with Group Captain Nayan Shantilal Bahua, while Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh flew in the second aircraft with Group Captain A. Mahendra.

In the 25-minute sortie, the formation flew over Gadisar Lake and Jaisalmer Fort before striking a designated tank target, showing the helicopter's operational capability. In a note written in the visitors' book, Ms. Murmu described the experience as enriching.

Need to strike a balance, says SC on SHANTI Act petition

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant on Friday said a balance has to be struck between "actual, visible, tangible national interest" and "unfortunate, hypothetical loss" while hearing a petition highlighting that India's new law on nuclear accidents has placed "abysmally low" liability on private operators and even exempted any accountability on the part of the suppliers.

Chief Justice Kant said that bringing nuclear power to India was a necessity to meet the nation's energy requirements.

"Today, if we do not bring nuclear power, you will not be able to meet your requirements. You do not want to allow the coal industry, you cannot compromise on forestry, you do not have gas... So, where are we going?" the Chief Justice asked the petitioner counsel, advocates Prashant Bhushan and Neha Rathi.

The petition filed by former IAS officer E.A.S. Sarma has challenged the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act of 2025, primarily on the ground that it allowed private sector and foreign companies to operate nuclear power plants in India and has further capped the liability of these operators at an "absurdly low level and exempted the supplier from any liability".

Mr. Bhushan pointed out that the SHANTI Act capped the government's residual liability at "300 million Special Drawing Rights – a figure that is abysmally low and effectively ensures that victims of death, injury, or property damage cannot recover even a small fraction of their actual losses".

"SHANTI Act, 2025 caps the liability of the largest plant operator in India at a mere ₹3,000 crore (i.e., approximately $331 million amounting to less than 0.1% of the cost of damage caused by the accidents at Chernobyl or Fukushima). The exemption of suppliers from any liability in the SHANTI Act is bound to encourage manufacturers and suppliers to cut corners in safety so as to maximise their profits," Mr. Bhushan submitted.

Justice Joymalya Bagchi on the Bench said the 2025 Act would have to be examined by the court.

"We have to examine whether the provisions of the new Act suffer from the vice of unconstitutionality... Whether it is manifestly unjust or arbitrary," Justice Bagchi observed orally.

INBRIEF

Never claimed I was ill while resigning, says Dhankhar

Former Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar has said he had never claimed that he was ill while resigning from his post. "I only said I was giving priority to my health, which everyone should do," he said at Sadulpur in Rajasthan's Churu district on Thursday. Mr. Dhankhar made the remarks at a small gathering at the residence of Congress MP Rahul Kaswan. He had visited the town to enquire about the health of Mr. Kaswan's father and former Churu MP Ram Singh Kaswan. "It is said that the first happiness is a healthy body. I have never neglected my health. When I said I was resigning, I never said I was ill. I said I was giving priority to my health," he said.

Trinamool nominates former DGP, SC lawyer to Rajya Sabha

The ruling Trinamool Congress on Friday announced four candidates, including former Director-General of Police Rajeev Kumar, for the upcoming elections to the Rajya Sabha. The other nominees are State Minister Babul Supriyo, Supreme Court lawyer Menaka Guruswamy, and actor Koel Mallick. "We extend our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to them. May they continue to uphold Trinamool's enduring legacy of resilience and its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of every Indian," the Trinamool Congress posted on social media.

Judicial officers will not be influenced, says SC

Court dismisses Trinamool's apprehension, says officers deployed to verify claims, objections by voters excluded from Bengal SIR will accept citizenship, identity documents listed in its orders

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday assured that judicial officers deployed for the verification of claims and objections filed by voters excluded from the electoral roll during the West Bengal special intensive revision would remain objective and accept documents of proof of citizenship and identity listed in successive top court orders.

The court dismissed the ruling All India Trinamool Congress government's apprehension that the Election Commission was trying to "influence" judicial officers by giving them "training".

In an oral mentioning made before a Bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the ruling party, said the poll body's training module may breach the orders of the Supreme Court itself.

Mr. Sibal submitted that the module may even include instructions not to receive verification documents approved by the Supreme Court.

> We have clearly specified in our orders which documents must be examined during verification. Our orders are as clear as daylight. The EC cannot override our orders
>
> **SUPREME COURT BENCH**

Faith in officers

"We went beyond our own imagination in this case... There has to be an end to all this. We know our judicial officers. They will not be influenced by anything. A person argues a case before the judiciary, the opposite party counters the arguments, and ultimately we take the decision impartially," Chief Justice Kant observed, explaining the impartiality of justice administration from the Bench.

Mr. Sibal said judicial officers cannot take instructions from the Election Commission.

"The EC cannot tell judicial officers 'don't take that or this certificate'. They are not bound by such instructions," the senior advocate submitted.

Justice Bagchi pointed out that the EC was authorised to impart training. "Who else will give the training? They are being trained to understand the modalities of the EC Net and the process of verification of documents... We have made it very clear in our orders on the documents which need to be looked into during the verification process. Our orders are as clear as daylight. The EC cannot override our orders," Justice Bagchi observed.

Mr. Sibal said the judicial officers were told not to accept domicile certificates from Sub-Division Officers. The court, however, said the documents mentioned in its orders had to be accepted.

Chief Justice Kant said verification of documents for the SIR was a "completely alien responsibility" for judicial officers. They were neither trained for it in the judicial academy nor was it part of their daily work.

The court reminded that both the EC and the State government were supposed to provide a congenial working atmosphere for the judicial officers.

"Look at the extent to which we have gone in this case... We have almost evacuated the State judiciary..." Justice Bagchi pointed out.

'Publish list'

The court further asked the Election Commission to publish and upload supplementary voter lists as soon as they were ready.

The court had earlier allowed the EC to publish a voter list in West Bengal on February 28. However, supplementary lists are to be published on a continuous basis till nomination for the Assembly election.

'Inflexible electricity grids are causing dangerous situations'

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Despite adding a significant amount of renewable energy capacity in 2025, the inability of India's existing electric grid infrastructure to smoothly switch between coal and solar-wind energy is leading to "dangerous" situations, Ghanshyam Prasad, chairperson of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), India's apex power-planning body, said on Thursday .

One of these situations occurred earlier in the week when an oscillation that was registered in Rajasthan was felt in Kudankulam, Tamil Nadu.

"We have already started to see that because of the variability in solar and wind, there are oscillations that have started happening to the grid and this is really dangerous. We need to arrest them as quickly as possible. In one of the oscillations which I was just reviewing two days back, I found that the oscillation was generated in Rajasthan and that was even felt in Kudankulam. So, you can imagine the impact because our entire grid is integrated. We need to be very, very careful," he said at a two-day India Energy Transition Summit, at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Grid oscillations occur due to fluctuation in transmission voltage and can significantly harm power-transmission equipment or cause massive blackouts. Mr. Prasad, however, did not suggest that oscillations were harming nuclear power equipment at Kudankulam.

In 2025, India added 48 GW of renewable energy capacity – the highest in a single year. This expansion nearly doubled the additions from the previous year, driven primarily by a massive surge in solar and wind projects.

Last year, non-fossil fuel sources constituted 52% of India's installed power capacity (about 264 gigawatts) or more than coal, gas and lignite combined. However, nearly 75% of the actual electricity that flows as power comes from coal, because it is the only source of fuel that is available on demand unlike solar and wind.

India's electric grid not being 'smart' enough to switch between sources promptly and inadequate battery storage contribute to the oscillations Mr. Prasad was referring to.

India to share cybercrime probe data with U.K.

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

India and the United Kingdom will share information on cybercrime investigations, modern slavery, and call centre scams, according to deliberations at the sixth India-UK Home Affairs Dialogue held in Delhi on Friday.

India's concerns over the breach of security of Indian dignitaries and diplomatic missions in the U.K. were also emphasised at the meet. While India will take the lead in providing information on cybercrime investigations, the U.K. would lead the collaboration on modern slavery.

The Indian delegation was led by Secretary (Border Management), Rajendra Kumar, and the U.K. delegation was led by Second Permanent Secretary, Home Office, Simon Ridley.

Webinar to discuss federalism and the Indian Republic

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Future Career Conversations series, jointly organised by the SRM Institute of Science and Technology and *The Hindu*, will feature a panel discussion on federalism on March 1.

The second webinar in this series, titled "Constitution Under the Microscope: Federalism, Free Speech and the Indian Republic", is open to online participants on March 1 at 11.30 a.m.

The session aims to examine key constitutional principles, their contemporary interpretations, and their impact on the functioning of the Indian Republic.

To frame the discussion, A. Vinay Kumar, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Science & Humanities, Law and Management), SRM Institute of Science and Technology, and P. Sree Sudha, Dean, SRM School of Law, will deliver special addresses.

The panel will feature Sumana Vedanth, Associate Professor, SRM School of Law, Suhrith Parthasarathy, advocate, Madras High Court, and Akila R. S., advocate and independent researcher.

The session will be moderated by Radhika Santhanam, Senior Assistant Editor, *The Hindu*. Registration is at newsth.live/THSRMLE.

Prospective Chief Justices to get early transfers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, said it has taken a "policy decision" to recommend transfers of judges pegged to take over as Chief Justices of other High Courts well in advance.

It reasoned that the move would give a transferred judge time to settle in and get valuable experience of the functioning of the High Court. A Collegium resolution of February 26 said judges who would succeed the incumbent Chief Justice of a High Court must be transferred at least two months ahead of the latter's superannuation. This step may help the transferred judge, who would be Chief Justice-in-waiting, gain experience from the incumbent too.

Navy boosts anti-submarine capability with *INS Anjadip*

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

In a move to sharpen its anti-submarine warfare capabilities, the Indian Navy on Friday commissioned its fourth indigenously designed and built anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft *INS Anjadip* at the Chennai Port.

It was commissioned by the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi. Senior naval officials were present.

The vessel, which is 77 metres long, has been designed to detect, track, and neutralise enemy submarines in coastal waters.

It has been named 'Anjadip' to carry forward the valour of the historic island off the coast of Karwar.

The ship is equipped with indigenous anti-submarine warfare weapons and sensor package.

INS Anjadip being commissioned by Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi at the Chennai Port on Friday. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

The *INS Anjadip* was constructed at Kattupalli by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Kolkata, and will mainly address the challenges of the littoral combat environment.

"*Anjadip* is equipped with modern shallow-water sonars, lightweight torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets, and combat management system. It is engineered for agility, precision and combat effectiveness," Admiral Tripathi said at the commissioning ceremony. "The ship and her systems distinctly reflect the growing strength of India's indigenous design and industrial ecosystem. Aatmanirbharta, today, is moving beyond Make in India to Trust in India," he added.

It is equipped to undertake coastal surveillance, low-intensity maritime operations, and search and rescue operations.

Religious leader gets interim relief in POCSO case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court on Friday granted interim protection from arrest to Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati, head of the Jyotirmath monastery, who faces allegations of sexually assaulting two minors at his ashram.

Justice Jitendra Kumar Sinha extended similar relief to Mr. Avimukteshwaranand's disciple, Swami Mukundanand Giri. The court, however, said the investigation would continue in accordance with the law. While reserving its order on interim bail, it directed both accused to cooperate fully with the probe.

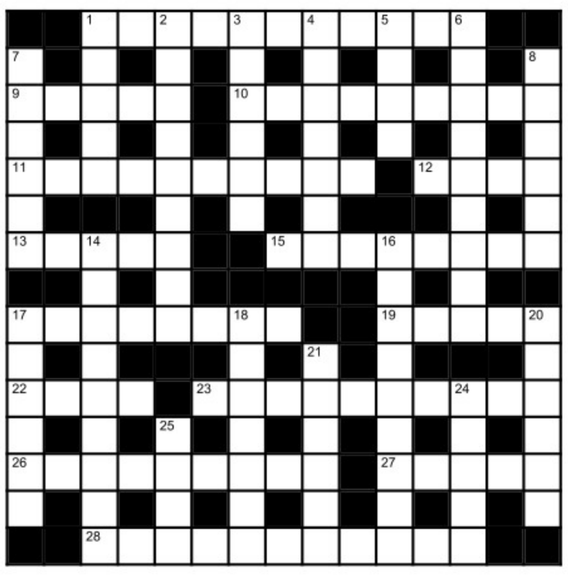
The matter is scheduled for hearing on March 12. The FIR against the two was registered following directions from a special court in Prayagraj.

TH CROSSWORD + 14729

(set by Incognito)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://crossword.thehindu.com*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Hold under restraint in vehicle, with energy and speed, consuming carbon (11)
9 Tender by alien for toilet fitting (5)
10 Slate tile manufactured in orbiter (9)
11/ 15 Marketing staff's maleness (10,8)
12 Gas outlet in Coventry (4)
13 Vice? Top class in peninsula! (5)
15 See 11
17 In long time, young lady has one release of gas for example (8)
19 Call on six and take seat (5)
22 Remove gum from homburg made for scientist (4)
23 Fierce apes scrambled for exit from inferno (4,6)
26 Mammal consumes minced sole in large quantities (9)
27 Swallows and gulls leaving second lake for Portugal (5)
28 Person displaying dextrality bending third hanger (5-6)

Down

1 "My country and I" on radio! (5)
2 Charlie and boy leaving energy storage units in feline care institutions (9)
3 Consequence of lustre being spoilt? (6)
4 Is a note rewritten in country? (7)
5 Fit a bell like emblem for starters (4)
6 Part of skin from European spider running across highway (9)
7 Sailor eats in a disorderly manner and reduces (6)
8 Wife, accompanied by nurse having container, entered (4,2)
14 Make a sound like a horse, boy, with our next door resident (9)
16 Anticipated face appearing in final (9)
17 Bends damaged bowlers after removing rim initially (6)
18 Animal DNA mutated in it, a chemical like sulphuric acid (7)
20 Tiny adolescent, perhaps, with sexy exterior (6)
21 General accompanying Ms Braun to city (6)
24 Read wrongly about first lady character appearing in Sherlock Holmes story (5)
25 Barge crashed in absence of a floating mass of ice (4)

SUDOKU

2				8		7		
			2	7			5	
7	3							6
	9		7			3		
6								7
		1			5		9	
5							8	4
	4			9	1			
		8		5				3

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No.SS6805 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

■	M	A	■	A	■	B	■	S	■	E	■	K	■	■
W	A	R	P	■	T	A	L	A	T	■	V	E	A	L
■	Y	■	T	■	H	■	U	■	R	■	I	■	N	■
N	O	T	I	C	E	■	S	T	A	G	N	A	T	E
■	■	■	T	■	N	■	H	■	N	■	C	■	■	■
A	C	C	U	R	A	T	E	■	G	O	E	T	H	E
■	A	■	D	■	■	■	D	■	L	■	■	■	A	■
A	T	H	E	I	S	T	■	R	E	M	A	R	R	Y
■	C	■	■	■	T	■	M	■	■	■	C	■	P	■
T	H	R	I	V	E	■	A	M	B	I	T	I	O	N
■	■	■	S	■	P	■	N	■	E	■	I	■	■	■
C	O	L	L	I	D	E	D	■	L	O	V	A	G	E
■	R	■	A	■	O	■	E	■	I	■	A	■	A	■
P	A	W	N	■	W	A	L	T	Z	■	T	O	S	S
■	L	■	D	■	N	■	A	■	E	■	E	■	H	■

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	9	6	5	1	7	2	4	8
7	2	5	8	3	4	6	1	9
1	4	8	6	9	2	7	5	3
5	3	1	2	4	9	8	6	7
4	8	7	3	6	1	9	2	5
9	6	2	7	5	8	4	3	1
2	5	9	4	8	3	1	7	6
8	7	3	1	2	6	5	9	4
6	1	4	9	7	5	3	8	2

FAITH

Guide to saranagati

Saranagati (surrender to God) is best done through an acharya or guru. We do not have the capacity to perform saranagati ourselves. Therefore, we surrender to an acharya who knows everything and perform saranagati to Perumal through him. It is called Pancha Samskaram. In some sampradayas, they also perform 'Bharanyasam' separately, while in some others, they do Bharanyasam after Pancha Samskaram, said Tirukkudanthai Dr. Venkatesh.

After performing saranagati to Perumal, all one needs to have is 'maha viswasam': the belief that Perumal will take care of one, irrespective of the situation. Many devotees assume that because they observe practices such as sandhyavandhana, reciting Vedas, visiting temples, being part of namasankeertans, listening to discourses, they will attain moksha. Such a thought should be dismissed but the practices should be continued with more fervour. Give up the thought that they alone help in reaching moksha and hold on to Perumal as our sole refuge. He gives us the most treasured moksha. As a mere mortal, we should realise that and perform all services that are possible during this lifetime. We reach Him only through His divine grace (*Mam ekam saranam vraja*). Bhagawan, in turn, assures us, *Aham tvam sarva papebhyo mokshayishayami* (He will remove all our sins), and orders us not to worry (*ma shuchah*). The belief we get wholeheartedly is saranagati.

There are five aspects to saranagati. We should do what pleases Perumal. We should refrain from doing what Perumal dislikes. Have a strong belief that He will take care of us. Without this belief, saranagati is invalid. One should realise Perumal is the sole refuge, no one else.

INBRIEF

Jio expands finance app to sell third-party products

Jio Financial Services on Friday announced an expansion of its app to work like a marketplace which will also sell third party products. The AI, machine learning and neural networks-powered new JioFinance app will also eventually build a 'financial score' for users and advise them on a range of aspects to manage finances, top officials said. "We wish to re-imagine financial services distribution with the new features in the app," said JFS MD and chief executive Hitesh Sethia. PTI

IIFL Home Finance secures $300 mn loan from ADB

IIFL Home Finance on Friday said it has signed a $300 million (about ₹2,700 crore) loan agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) to strengthen access to affordable housing finance. IIFL Home Finance will on-lend the loan proceeds to provide mortgages to women in low-income communities in peri-urban and urban areas and in lagging states of India, including a target of over 25% of the loan proceeds for green-certified affordable homes. PTI

U.S. FDA issues 4 observations to Aurobindo arm's unit

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (U.S. FDA) has issued four observations to a formulation manufacturing facility of Aurobindo Pharma subsidiary Eugia Pharma Specialities near Hyderabad. The facility (Unit-I), in Ranga Reddy district, was inspected from February 16-27 and on conclusion the observations were issued. It is the third facility of the generic drugmaker and its subsidiary to receive U.S. FDA observations this month.

'Misselling must stop, banking is about service, not targets'

Bandhan Group Chairman Chandra Shekhar Ghosh calls for rejig of Banking Regulation Act for credit inclusion and to support Viksit Bharat

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Days after Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asked banks to stop misselling, Bandhan Group Chairman Chandra Sekhar Ghosh said misselling, which has increased after banks began setting targets for their employees, must stop immediately.

"Misselling should immediately stop, no doubt. It is not good. It is a target. When you [banks] give the target, that will happen. I have been saying that in the private sector there is too much of target. Every morning they discuss that. It [banking] is not the targets business, it is a customer service business," the former MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank, said in an exclusive interview.

Chandra Shekhar Ghosh

"We did not sell any insurance, mutual fund products in the first 5 years of running the bank. We started after 5 years as customers asked for it, else they could have gone elsewhere. Now if any misselling happens we return the money within 24 hours. If you (staff] are not returning back money you will be terminated," he emphasised.

Commenting on recent frauds involving private sector bank employees, he said there was a need for enhanced vigilance and stronger supervision at the branch level.

He said Bandhan Bank had invested a lot of money in training the staff. "Training not on transactions, but on motivation. They are told about the value of customers' money," Mr. Ghosh said.

"I feel there is a needed to strengthen the monitoring supervision. Strengthen the loyalty of the people," he emphasised to prevent bank frauds by employees.

"The Banking Regulation Act was enacted in 1949. The scenario was different then when India was not even a one trillion economy. It took 63 years to build a one-trillion economy and within the next three years one trillion will be added. This cannot be achieved without banking support. So, the Act should be revised," he said.

Joint statement on U.S. trade deal provides for rebalancing: Goyal

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said India is watching developments following the U.S. Supreme Court's verdict against tariffs, pointing out that the joint statement on the proposed interim trade deal provides for a rebalancing of the pact "should circumstances change".

The Minister's remarks came on the heels of U.S. President Donald Trump's 10% tariff against all trading partners for 150 days. The temporary 10% tariff was imposed on February 24 after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down President Trump's April 2025 decision to impose reciprocal tariffs on all imports.

On February 24, Mr. Trump also announced further increasing the tariffs to 15%.

"We'll have to watch. And by the way, you must have read my joint statement that we had finalised with the U.S. It has categorically said that should the circumstances change, the deal would be re-balanced...to ensure that the balance of the deal is maintained on both sides," he said when asked if India's negotiating position will change after the verdict.

Piyush Goyal

A joint statement issued on February 7 stated that in the event of any changes to the agreed-upon tariffs of either country, the U.S. and India agree that the other country may modify its commitments.

Referring to this statement, Mr. Goyal said :"It provides that the sanctity of the deal is both ways".

The Minister was speaking at an event here on Friday.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	FRIDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	81,287	-1.17
US Dollar	91.08	-0.18
Gold	1,64,700	1.10
Brent oil	72.72	0.13

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2161.80	-54.60
Adani Ports	1521.00	-29.60
Apollo Hosp	7821.50	46.50
Asian Paints	2376.20	-18.70
Axis Bank	1383.90	-11.60
Bajaj Auto	9972.50	-137.50
Bajaj Finserv	1993.40	-47.90
Bajaj Finance	995.90	-17.05
Bharat Elec	444.70	-4.35
Bharti Airtel	1879.30	-50.30
Cipla	1348.20	-9.90
Coal India	430.65	-2.85
Dr Reddys Lab	1286.30	-33.00
Eicher Motors	8010.50	-179.50
Eternal Ltd.	246.30	-0.20
Grasim Ind	2799.80	-63.70
HCL Tech	1389.10	15.60
HDFC Bank	887.75	-10.85
HDFC Life	715.30	-18.70
Hindalco	924.70	-16.60
Hind Unilever	2338.10	-45.20
ICICI Bank	1378.90	-26.00
IntGlobeAvi	4827.20	-106.30
Infosys	1300.10	11.00
ITC	313.60	-4.70
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	255.40	-0.75
JSW Steel	1264.70	-15.90
Kotak Bank	415.20	-9.35
L&T	4278.30	-8.20
M&M	3397.40	-87.20
Maruti Suzuki	14857.00	-356.00
Max Healthcare	1091.95	-17.95
NestleIndia	1291.70	-26.30
NTPC	381.90	0.00
ONGC	279.70	-0.40
PowerGrid Corp	298.65	-4.60
Reliance Ind	1393.90	-12.90
SBI Life	2037.20	-45.60
State Bank	1201.70	-7.80
Shriram Finance Ltd.	1079.40	-25.20
Sun Pharma	1737.00	-48.70
TataConsumerProduct	1141.00	-18.50
Tata Steel	212.33	-3.19
TCS	2637.40	-10.30
Tech Mahindra	1357.80	-4.00
Titan	4327.50	-15.10
Tata Motors PV	382.65	-8.90
Trent Ltd.	3899.50	43.50
UltraTech Cement	12677.00	-260.00
Wipro	200.96	-0.12

Fiscal deficit at 63% of full-year target: CGA

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Centre's fiscal deficit at the end of January stood at ₹9.8 lakh crore, or 63% of the annual budget target for 2025-26, compared with 74.5% in the year-ago period, government data released on Friday showed.

The Centre estimates the fiscal deficit during 2025-26 at 4.4% of GDP, or ₹15.58 lakh crore.

With 115 MT stock, CIL confident of meeting peak summer demand

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

State-owned miner Coal India Ltd. (CIL) said on Friday that all its producing subsidiaries combined currently held pithead stocks of up to 115 MT as on February 26, with the quantum expected to grow further as the fiscal year approaches an end.

Explaining about the quantum of availability, the Kolkata-headquartered miner exuded confidence in its ability to meet peak power demand as summer approaches.

According to rating agency ICRA, power demand is expected to rebound 5% in FY 2027.

FDI rises 18% to $47.87 bn

Foreign direct investments (FDI) in India rose 18% to $47.87 billion during April-December 2025-26, according to government data. Investments from overseas during the nine-month period of the previous fiscal stood at $40.67 billion. PTI

BoB to raise up to ₹10,000 cr. via green infra bonds on March 4

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

The bonds will be allocated on a uniform yield basis through a closed bidding process.

Bank of Baroda said it plans to raise up to ₹10,000 crore through issuance of green infrastructure bonds on March 4.

The base issue size is ₹5,000 crore, with a green shoe option to retain oversubscription of up to ₹5,000 crore, taking the total issue size to ₹10,000 crore, market sources said.

Bonds will have a tenor of seven years and are scheduled to mature on March 5, 2033.

The pay-in and allotment date is March 5, 2026. Pay in is the date when exchange of bonds and money takes place between issuer and investor.

The bidding will take place between 11:00 am and 12:00 pm on March 4 on the Electronic Book Provider (EBP) platform of NSE. Bonds have been rated 'AAA' with 'Stable' by CARE Ratings and ICRA.

The bonds will carry annual interest payments and will be allocated on a uniform yield basis through a closed bidding process.

Norway sovereign wealth fund pulls out of Adani

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Norway's $1.2 trillion sovereign wealth fund, the world's largest, has decided to exclude Adani Green Energy Ltd. (AGEL) from its portfolio due to concern about its alleged links to financial crime.

Norges Bank, which had in May 2024 excluded Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd., on its website added AGEL to the list of companies that it had decided to exclude from its portfolio.

Cites corruption

It cited "gross corruption or other serious financial crime" as the criterion for its decision but gave no explanation. While AGEL did not immediately offer any comments, industry officials said a fossil fuel funded sovereign fund is trying to create a narrative against a renewable company.

Norges Bank Investment Management, the entity managing the Norwegian sovereign wealth fund, had previously excluded Indian blue chip firms like ONGC, Coal India, BHEL, GAIL India Ltd., ITC, L&T, NTPC, and Vedanta from its portfolio for serious offences ranging from production of coal or coal-based energy to environmental damage, sale of weapons to states in armed conflicts and production of tobacco and nuclear weapons.

CSIR – INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL BIOLOGY
4, Raja SC Mullick Road, Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700032
Advt. No. R&C/587/2026
Vacancy Code : 5872601
A walk-in-interview for engagement of **JRF(GATE)** will be held by CSIR-IICB at 4, Raja S. C. Mullick Road, Kolkata – 32, on **17.03.2026** from 9:30 a.m. For details log on to our website **iicb.res.in**
Controller of Administration

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS - TIRUPATI
Office of the Chief Engineer — TENDER NOTICE
ADV No.67/D3/CE/TTD/2025-26 & NIT No.1058 /SE-II /TTD/2025 -26 dt:26-02- 2026
NAME OF WORK:1) Providing Permanent shelter & Queue lines with Toilets for SSD (Slotted Sarva Darshan) waiting pilgrims at west side of Alwar tank area at Tirumala. **Amount:800.00 Lakhs, Time for Completion:6 months.**
NOTE: For full details log on to the Website **https://www.tirumala.org.**
TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC(Adv.No.419) Dated:27-02-2026 — EXECUTIVE OFFICER

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No : 06/2025-26/ KWA/PHC/ TVLA (RT1),07/2025-26/ KWA/PHC/ TVLA(RT1),11/2025-26/ KWA/PHC/TVLA(RT1),12/2025-26/ KWA/PHC/ TVLA(RT1) **(1)**JJM Ranni-Perunad Pt- WSS to Seethathode -Laying DI pumping main from Sump at Plappally to G.L.S.R at Lahai, DI Gravity line to Thulappally, supply and erection of Clear Water Pump Sets, Construction of 3.50LL Break Pressure Tank between Plappally and Thulappally, etc..**(2)**JJM- WSS to Seethathode - Construction of GLSRs , CWPM, and Distribution Network.**(3)** JJM : WSS to Mylapr- Design and Construction of 6m dia intake well cum Pumphouse and Raw Water Pumping Main at Maniyar.**(4)** JJM- WSS to Pramadam And V.Kottayam - Distribution System -7 MLD WTP at Kulappara, 10 LL OHSR, CWPM from Sump to OH tank, Pumpset. CWPM, 2.5LL & 3LL OHSR; 5LL Sump cum Pumphouse& 9m dia Intake well cum Pumphouse, RWPM, Pumpset, transformer room and transformer.
EMD : Rs. 500000, 500000, 200000, 500000, **Tender fee :** Rs. 19518, 19518, 13010, 19518, **Last Date for submitting Tender :** 16-03-2026, 02:00pm, **Phone :** 8547638027
Website : **www.kwa.kerala.gov.in** **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**
Superintending Engineer
KWA-JB-GL-6-750-2025-26 — PH Circle, Pathanamthitta

NORTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED
Corporate Identity Number: U40109TG2000SGC034119
e - Auction Notice
TGNPDCL is intends to sale of Scrap Materials through e-auction platform.
e-auction Specification No. : **CE/P&MM/SCR-01 TO SCR-21/2025-26.**
Name of the Material: Various scrap materials. E–Auction starts **From 26.03.2026 at 11:00 Hrs.** INSPECTION: **28.02.2026 to 25.03.2026. (Every day from 10.00 Hrs. to 17.00 Hrs. Excluding Holidays)** EMD Submission Last date and Time is: **25.03.2026 at 17.:00 hrs.**
For further details visit auction.telangana.gov.in and www.tgnpdcl.in
For further details contact: Vupadhi Techno Services Pvt. Ltd Hyderabad M.No:7337318404
Note: Changes if any, shall be uploaded as corrigendum only through website: **https://auction .telangana.gov.in**
Mail Id: cgmpmm@tgnpdcl.com — Sd/- Chief Engineer (P&MM)
DIPR R.O.No.1223-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2025-26 Dt:27-02-2026

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, WATER RESOURCES CIRCLE UDAIPUR
Near Akashvani, Chetak Circle, Udaipur (Rajasthan) 313001
Phone No.: 0294-2414794, Email: sewrcudr@gmail.com
No.- SE/Actt./Udaipur/F. /2025-26/1017-18 Dated: 12.02.2026
E-NIT No. 03/2025-26
Bids for the following work are invited from interested bidders upto 6:00 PM, dated 04-03-2026

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated. Cost of Work (Rs.)
1	Construction of Khari feeder Ch 100WC, 135 WC, 166WC, 182WC and 233 WC Tehsil Nathdwara, District Rajsamand, **UBN NO. WRD2526WSOB02647**	29376599.00

Other particulars of bid may be visited on the Procurement portal http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.dipr.rajasthan.gov.in & www.water.rajasthan.gov.in/wrd.
DIPR/C/3558/26 — Superintending Engineer, Water Resources Circle Udaipur

Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Ltd.
D-Block, Swasthya Bhawan, C-Scheme, Jaipur - 302005
Ph. No. 0141-2223887, Fax No. 0141-2228065, E-Mail-edepmrmsc-rj@nic.in
Ref. No. : F-8() RMSC/EPM/M-3/NIB-881/2025-26/1736 Dated :- 23/02/2026
Corrigendum / Addendum
Bid for item X-Ray Machine (500 ma) (NIB-881) are invited from interested bidders up to Date: 12/03/2026 : 06:00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on Procurement portal website **https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** or **www.dipronline.org or https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in or website http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in.**
UBN No. : MSC2526GLOB00068
Executive Director (EPM)
Raj.Samwad/C/25/21353 — Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL & CONTROLLER
RUHS COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES,
Sector – 11, Kumbha Marg, Pratap Nagar, Jaipur - 302033
Ph. : 0141-2795624, 634 Email : principalruhscms@ruhsraj.org
No. :- RUHS-CMS/Store/2025-26/12629 Date :- 23/02/2026
Notice Inviting E-Bids
Single Stage Two envelope online bids are invited on eprocrajasthan.gov.in upto 02.00 pm of 25/03/2026 for Construction of BLS Training Centre Skill Lab at RUHS-CMS, Jaipur. (Total Est. Cost Rs. 2,56,00,000.00) Details may be seen in the Bidding Documents at the Website sppp.raj.nic.in or **eproc.rajasthan.gov.in or www.ruhscms.org.**
UBN :- CMS2526WSOB00131 Principal,
Raj.Samwad/C/25/21508 — RUHS College of Medical Sciences, Jaipur

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
Andhra Pradesh Food Processing Society (APFPS)
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP No.: APFPS-ITPU/KNL/001 **Issue Date: 28.02.2026**
APFPS invites proposals from experienced Food Processing Plant & Machinery suppliers for Procurement of Plant, Design, Supply & Installation of Tomato Processing Unit at Sy.No.63/3 of Dudekonda Village, Pattikonda Mandal, Kurnool District through e-Procurement portal **https://apeprocurement.gov.in**. Last date for submission of bids is **13.03.2026**. For more details visit **https://apfps.ap.gov.in** Ph. **9100039591**.
Chief Executive Officer
DIPR 4872PP/CL, Dt:27/02/2026 — AP Food Processing Society

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED
(MATERIAL MANAGEMENT & CONTRACT WING) NEW POWER HOUSE,
INDUSTRIAL AREA, JODHPUR-342003 PHONE: (0291) 2742223, FAX: (0291) 2746539
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
E-Procurement Tender is invited for supply of 11 KV, 400 Amp. Isolator with Post Insulator without Earth Blade under TN-2121 (UBN JVV2526GLOB00907), Universal Portable Electronic Reference Sub-Standard Energy Meter under TN-2125 (UBN JVV2526GLOB00908), Silicone Resuscitator TN-2126 (UBN JVV2526GSOB00909) and First Aid Box TN-2127 (UBN JVV2526GLOB00910).
Details regarding Quantity, Tender cost, Bid security, Schedule date of tender opening for aforesaid tenders are available on our website at **energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl** and also at **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in.**
Raj.Samwad/C/25/21336 — SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM&C)
बिजली संबंधी शिकायतों के लिए टोल फ्री नम्बर 1800 180 6045

TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram - 639 136. Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu.
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender No.	Material Description	Date of publishing of Tender document in NIC/TNPL website	Due date
252613 007557	Procurement of Paper Machine Clothings (Wires, Felts, Screens, Transfer Belt and Shoe Press Sleeves) for Paper Machine #1, 2 &3 in TNPL Unit-I.	03.03.2026	20.03.2026

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website and NIC Portal only. For further details, please visit websites : **www.tnpl.com / https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
DIPR/1457/Tender/2026 — *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

ओएनजीसी ONGC Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited
Godavari Bhavan, Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh
Contact No. 0883-2494304
INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
ONGC Rajahmundry Asset intends to take up Integrated Drilling Environmental Waste Management Services - Pitless Drilling. Expression of Interest is sought from reputed service provider, who has the requisite technical experience and financial capabilities to provide the integrated project management services. For further details of EOI please refer to https://tenders.ongc.co.in under Expression of Interest tab. For any queries mail to technology_dsrjy@ongc.co.in.
अधिक जानकारी के लिए कृपया **https://tenders.ongc.co.in; https://etender.ongc.co.in** पर जाएं

KERALA STATE COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT(KSCSTE),
Sasthrabhavan, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram – 695004,
Phone : 0471-2548316, website : www.kscste.kerala.gov.in
NOTIFICATION
The KSCSTE is seeking qualified candidates for the post of Director, KSCSTE-JNTBGRI
For details log on to www.kscste.kerala.gov.in.
Last date for the receipt of application is 21.03.2026, 5.00 p.m
MEMBER SECRETARY
(D3/214/2026)

SMART CITY AHMEDABAD DEVELOPMENT LTD
Expression of Interest (EOI) For Selection of Agency for Design and Development of AI Based Employee Management System for Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation

EOI Pre Meeting	**06/03/2026** 12:00 Hrs.
Last Date for Online Submission	**23/03/2026** 17:00 Hrs.
Last Date for Physical Submission	**23/03/2026** 17:00 Hrs.
Detail & EOI available on	www.tender.nprocure.com www.ahmedabadcity.gov.in & www.smartcityahmedabad.com
Smart City Ahmedabad Development Ltd. (SCADL) Office Address	Command and Control Centre, Opp. Divan Ballubhai School, Nr. Sanskar Kendra, Paldi, Ahmedabad-380007
Email	smartcity@ahmedabadcity.gov.in, **scadl.amc@gmail.com**

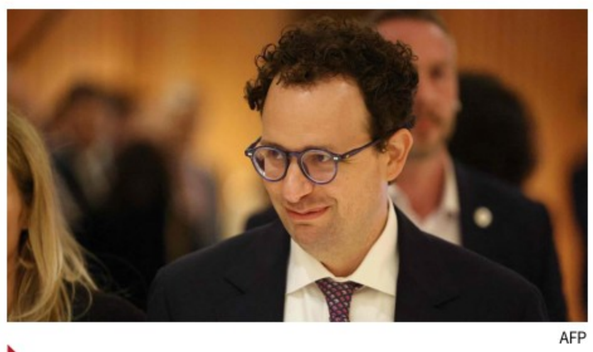
FOR ANY AMC COMPLAIN/SUGGESTION CALL 155303

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
NOTICE INVITING BID
Bids for following works are invited from interested bidders up to 01.04.2026 (06:00 PM)
(i) "Modification/Shifting of 220kV D/C Jodhpur-CHB line (presently charged on 132kV voltage level) from Kheme ka Kuan to municipal Nala using 1200 Sq mm, 220 kV XLPE cable system terminating on D/C monopole including detailed route survey, laying and installation of cable and monopole along with associated accessories / items and civil works " against specification No. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-152 [UBN No. VPN2526WLOB03048]".
(ii) "Modification of existing EHV overhead 132 kV D/C LILO Chotisadri Line & 132 kV S/C Nimbahera-Pratapgarh Line at 27780 & 27970 for new BG Railway Line work between Badisadri-Nimach section of NWR (Ajmer devision) including Survey, Supply of all equipment/materials, Erection (Including civil works), Testing & Commissioning " against specification No. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-161 [UBN No. VPN2526WSOB03049]".
Other particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal **(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in)** of the state and **http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl** departmental website.
Any extension in bid submission/opening date (if any) will be floated/uploaded on **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in; energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rrvpn** & **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** only.
Superintending Engineer
Raj.Samwad/C/25/21549 R.V.P.N./TR-7398/2026 (Automation, N/M& SP), Jaipur

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
Bangalore - 560012
IISc/CCMD/Tenders/2025-26 Date: 25.02.2026
Tender Notification- IISc/ Tender-CIV-23/2025-26
Indian Institute of Science invites bids in two cover system through e-procurement platform **https://eprocure.gov.in**. Any specialized firms company registered under KPWD /CPWD/ railways/ MES/ central PSUs/ or any Government department of **Class I/Class A Civil Contractors are eligible to apply for the work of "Providing and Fixing locks and safety protection measures at Water supply installations, sump and pumping stations at IISc, Bengaluru."** Estimated Cost of Project is **Rs. 26,56,214/-.** Last date of receipt of application is **17th March 2026 at 15:30 Hrs.** Any other details can be obtained from the office of the Centre for Campus Management & Development, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru on all working days or e-mail **office.ccmd@iisc.ac.in**
Sd/-, Registrar

WASHINGTON

'AI firm cannot in good conscience accede to Pentagon's demands'



AFP

Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei said on Thursday the artificial intelligence company "cannot in good conscience accede" to the Pentagon's demands to allow unrestricted use of its technology, deepening the unusually public clash with the Trump administration that is threatening to pull its contract by Friday. AP

BAGHDAD

Iraq armed group tells fighters to prepare for long Iran-U.S. war

AFP

Kataeb Hezbollah, a powerful Iran-backed Iraqi armed group, told its fighters on Thursday to prepare for the scenario of a long war in Iran should the U.S. launch strikes. It also warned the U.S. of "immense losses" were it to start a war in the region, while a commander said his group was "highly likely" to intervene. AFP

WASHINGTON

'U.S. military used laser to take down Border Protection drone'

REUTERS

The U.S. military used a laser on Thursday to shoot down a "seemingly threatening" drone flying near the U.S.-Mexico border. It turned out the drone belonged to Customs and Border Protection, lawmakers said. It was the second time in two weeks that a laser was fired in the area. AP

CHAPPAQUA

Bill Clinton denies wrongdoing at grilling on relations with Epstein

AP

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton denied wrongdoing at a Congressional panel on Friday on his well-documented links to Jeffrey Epstein. Mr. Clinton insists that he broke ties well before the disgraced billionaire's 2008 conviction for sex offences. "I saw nothing, and I did nothing wrong," Mr. Clinton said. AFP

Greens win U.K. bypoll, in blow to Starmer

Green Party's Hannah Spencer won the Gorton and Denton seat with 40.7% votes; Reform UK came in second with 28.7%, while Labour finished third with 25.4%; Prime Minister Starmer called the result 'very disappointing', but said he would fight against extremes both on the right and left

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

It was a bad night for U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his Labour Party after the Green Party won the Greater Manchester parliamentary seat of Gorton and Denton from Labour. The nativist far-right party Reform UK came in second and Labour in third place in an election that could further erode Mr. Starmer's ability to stay in position until the next general election.

"This byelection has shown that there is no longer any such thing as a safe seat and there is no part of the country where the Green Party cannot win," said 36-year-old plumber Hannah Spencer, who won the election with around 40.7% of the vote. "I think this election will transform the face of British politics," said Greens chief Zack Polanski, during a joint press conference with Ms. Spencer in Manchester.

"We have torn the roof of British politics, and that's because people now recognise there is an alternative," Mr. Polanski said, adding Labour's "stranglehold" was over as people realised there was an alternative. Labour won 25.4% of the vote, behind Reform UK's 28.7%. The Conservatives got a mere 1.9% of the vote and the Liberal Democrats 1.8%.

The results meant that Labour's vote share had halved relative to its 2024 general election performance in the constituency.

Green Party's candidate Hannah Spencer being congratulated after her victory in the byelection, in Manchester on Friday. REUTERS

There were divisions within Labour on the choice for the byelection with a faction preferring the charismatic Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, over councillor Angeliki Stogia, who was chosen. Earlier this month, Mr. Starmer and Labour's governing body found themselves at the centre of criticism for denying Mr. Burnham permission to run, with some speculating that Mr. Starmer was blocking a path to Westminster for Mr. Burnham in order to fend off a potential leadership challenge in the future. In addition to bread-and-butter issues facing Britons featuring the campaign, there were accusations of sectarianism in the campaign.

The Greens were criticised for distributing material trying to appeal to Muslim voters, including a video showing Mr. Starmer with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.K. Deputy PM David Lammy with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and another clip depicting Reform leader Nigel Farage and U.S. President Donald Trump. One particular image with Mr. Modi and Mr. Netanyahu said in Bengali: "But political leaders are not working for us," and said bills and rents were going up.

Some campaign leaflets were in Urdu asking voters to "punish" Labour for its position on Gaza. Muslims have traditionally aligned with the Labour Party.

"I think people are allowed to communicate with different communities... about those things those communities care about," Mr. Polanski said on Friday in an interview with the BBC. Mr. Polanski, who is Jewish, said it was wrong to assume that only Muslims cared about the genocide in Gaza.

Mr. Starmer called the result "very disappointing". While he acknowledged voters' frustration, he said incumbent governments face such results during their term. He said he would fight against extremes in politics both on the right and left.

U.S. advises embassy staff in Israel to leave now if they desire

Associated Press
TEL AVIV

The U.S. Embassy in Israel on Friday told its staff that it could leave the country and urged anyone considering departure to do so immediately, as the threat of an American strike on Iran looms.

U.S. Ambassador Mike Huckabee told embassy employees in an email that discussions with officials in Washington had led to a decision authorising departures for those who wished to leave.

"Those wishing to take AD should do so TODAY," Mr. Huckabee wrote, using an acronym for "authorised departure".

Mr. Huckabee said that there was no need for panic, but for those desiring to leave, it was important to make plans soon.

Mike Huckabee

Meanwhile, China told its citizens to evacuate from Iran "as soon as possible", and those in Israel to strengthen preparedness, citing a significant rise in security risks in the West Asia.

Beijing's Foreign Ministry also told its citizens to avoid travelling to Iran for the time being.

How Pakistan and Afghan Taliban, former allies, drifted into 'open war'

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

"Our patience has run out", Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif wrote in a social media post on Friday. "Now it is open war between us and you." Mr. Asif's remarks came after Pakistan carried out air strikes on Kabul and Kandahar, Afghanistan's two largest cities, and Paktia, a border province. The strikes were launched hours after Afghan troops attacked Pakistani border posts. Those attacks, in turn, followed earlier Pakistani strikes this week, which Islamabad claimed were carried out in retaliation for recent terror attacks inside its territory.

These incidents, along with the allegations and counter-allegations, underscore the increasingly combustible nature of relations between Islamabad and Kabul. Until a few years ago, Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban were close allies. The Taliban's top leadership was based in Pakistan's Quetta while it fought U.S. troops and the previous Afghan government. But four years after the Taliban captured Kabul and established its Islamic Emirate, the former allies have become bitter adversaries. What went wrong between the two?

When the Taliban were an insurgent movement, they relied on Pakistan's support to sustain their fight against U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Pakistan, wary of India's growing influence in Afghanistan, viewed the Taliban, a long-time ally, as a vehicle for extending its influence in the neighbourhood. Pakistan believed the Taliban's return to power would restore its "strategic depth" in South-Central Asia. But the Taliban's rise reshaped regional dynamics, defying Pakistan's calculations. Islamabad-Rawalpindi soon found itself confronting three distinct challenges.

Vehicles at a crossing along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Balochistan, on Friday . REUTERS

Border clashes

The first is the Durand Line, the 2,640-km border established between British India and Afghanistan in 1893 and inherited by Pakistan. No Afghan government since the collapse of the monarchy in 1973 has accepted the line, which cuts through the tribal heartland of the region. The Taliban, too, have refused to recognise the boundary drawn by Mortimer Durand, a British diplomat, and Abdur Rahman Khan, the Emir of Afghanistan.

The border dispute was not an issue between the Taliban and Pakistan when the former was an insurgency. But when the Taliban became the state, the long-standing inter-state dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan moved to the centre of bilateral relations. If Pakistan expected the Taliban to behave as a client partner, it miscalculated. The Taliban sought to assert their autonomy, leading to growing tensions.

The other Taliban

The second is the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistani Taliban. The TTP and the Afghan Taliban are organisationally different but ideologically aligned. The Afghan Taliban wanted to expel U.S. troops from Afghanistan, defeat the Islamic Republic's security forces, and turn the country into an Islamic Emirate. They achieved their objectives in August 2021. The TTP, for its part, aims to replicate the Afghan Taliban's success, at least in Pakistan's tribal regions.

While the Pakistani military supported the Afghan Taliban, it has long viewed the TTP as a serious security threat. The Afghan Taliban's return to power in 2021 inevitably strengthened the TTP. Initially, the Afghan Taliban brokered a truce between the Pakistani military and the TTP, but the ceasefire collapsed in 2022 and hostilities resumed. In the years since, the security situation in Pakistan's border regions has deteriorated sharply, with attacks occurring almost daily.

According to the Pak Institute for Peace Studies, at least 400 people, most of them security personnel, were killed in TTP attacks across Pakistan last year. Pakistan accuses the Afghan Taliban of harbouring the TTP. Islamabad says it will carry out strikes inside Afghanistan targeting TTP camps. But Kabul says such attacks violate Afghanistan's sovereignty and has warned of retaliation, perpetuating a cycle of violence.

The India factor

The third challenge Pakistan faces is the Taliban's warming ties with India. New Delhi had highly strained ties with the Taliban when the group was in power in the late 1990s. But the Taliban 2.0 have shown greater flexibility in improving ties with India and New Delhi has reciprocated.

Last year, India hosted the Taliban Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi. Last month, the Taliban appointed an envoy to lead their diplomatic mission in Delhi. Though India has not formally recognised the Taliban, it is clear that engagement between Delhi and Kabul is deepening.

This, too, has complicated Pakistan's strategic calculations. On Friday, Mr. Asif, Pakistan's Defence Minister, said the Taliban had become a "proxy for India".

Pakistan supported the Taliban in the hope of securing strategic depth. Instead, it now finds itself dealing with a Taliban which it thinks poses security, cross-border and geopolitical challenges to Islamabad.

NOT ONE-DIMENSIONAL

West Indies batters can adapt to the situation, reckons Arshdeep

VIJAY SONEJI

India's Arshdeep Singh said the West Indies batters have the ability to adapt to different situations. Asked if their aggressive approach could backfire against India, Arshdeep said: "It is not just one gear. They played really well in the middle overs [against South Africa] and took the game deep. It shows they can adapt to the situation".

BEREAVED

Rinku Singh flies back home after his father's demise

FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

Rinku Singh has left for home after the death of his father Khanchand Singh. The batter had rejoined the squad ahead of Thursday's T20 World Cup Super Eight match against Zimbabwe, but did not figure in the XI. Khanchand was battling liver cancer and passed away on Friday at a hospital on the outskirts of New Delhi.

IN THIS TOGETHER

They had more belief than me: Abhishek on teammates' support

B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

After scoring a blazing 30-ball 55 against Zimbabwe, India opener Abhishek Sharma thanked his teammates. "They had more belief than me... it is like a family" Abhishek said of the Indian side. "No matter if you get out for a zero or get out early, you are going to play all the games, win the games for the team".

HUGE SETBACK

Hasaranga's absence upset the balance: SL's spin-bowling coach

FILE PHOTO: AP

If you have a player like him, who is a world-class performer, any team is going to have challenges restoring the balance. We are in the same boat; that was clear. We have done our best and we have good replacements. But, it is a challenge — Sri Lanka's spin-bowling coach Rene Ferdinands on missing Wanindu Hasaranga.

Jacks and Rehan's late charge snatches top spot for England

The two put on 44 runs off just 16 balls for the unbroken seventh wicket to stun New Zealand in a tense chase; Black Caps' semifinal hopes depend on the outcome of the Super Eight match between Pakistan and the already-eliminated Sri Lanka

T20 WORLD CUP

Abhishek Saini
COLOMBO

Will Jacks and Rehan Ahmed emerged as unlikely heroes for England and landed a sucker punch on New Zealand with their unbeaten 44-run seventh-wicket alliance, snatching a four-wicket win in their T20 World Cup 2026 Super Eight Group 2 match at the R. Premadasa Stadium here on Friday.

With 43 needed off the final three overs, Rehan launched the incursion against Glenn Phillips with a waft over long on.

Jacks made the most of short-pitched bowling to dispatch a maximum over long-on and two consecutive boundaries – first down the ground and then square-leg.

After Rehan's reverse-sweep over short third and a swat over long-off in Mitchell Santner's over, England was just five short of the 160-run target, with six balls in hand. Matt Henry's bouncer ploy could only delay the inevitable for two balls, before Jacks' glance down fine-leg got England the winning runs.

On a roll: Jacks continued his terrific run to take England home in a thrilling finish. AFP

The dramatic turnaround kept Pakistan alive in the tournament while England topped the group.

In the first innings, England's spinners applied a timely squeeze on a flourishing innings.

After the openers provided a steady platform, Phillips began to hunt against the spinners, picking full-length deliveries for quick runs. The highlight was his no-look shot against Adil Rashid, which sent a googly deep into the stands over midwicket.

But England's insistence with spin paid off, and wickets at the other end eventually forced Phillips into an error.

New Zealand lost Mark Chapman and Daryl Mitchell in the space of 12 runs. The squeeze around the Kiwis was firmly in place by the time Phillips departed in the 18th over.

Santner and McConchie eked out 24 runs off the last three overs, but that was far less than what England would manage later in the evening.

The scores:
New Zealand 159/7 in 20 overs (Tim Seifert 35, Glenn Phillips 39, Adil Rashid 2/28, Will Jacks 2/23, Rehan Ahmed 2/28) lost to England 161/6 in 19.3 overs (Tom Banton 33, Will Jacks 32 n.o., Rachin Ravindra 3/19).
Toss: New Zealand; **PoM:** Jacks.

Super Eight Table

GROUP 1

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
South Africa (Q)	2	2	0	0	4	2.890
West Indies	2	1	1	0	2	1.791
India	2	1	1	0	2	-0.100
Zimbabwe	2	0	2	0	0	-4.475

GROUP 2

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
England (Q)	3	3	0	0	6	1.096
New Zealand	3	1	1	1	3	1.390
Pakistan	2	0	1	1	1	-0.461
Sri Lanka	2	0	2	0	0	-2.800

Q: QUALIFIED

Pakistan targets big win over Lanka to progress

Abhishek Saini
PALLEKELE

Pakistan will be eyeing a big win over Sri Lanka to seal a semifinal spot as the two sides clash in the final Super Eight Group 2 match of the T20 World Cup at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium here on Saturday.

Milestone beckons: Farhan could break Kohli's record for most runs in a single T20 World Cup edition. AP

Lifeline

Pakistan was given a lifeline following England's thrilling four-wicket victory over New Zealand on Friday. Pakistan has just a solitary point and a victory will take it level with New Zealand on three points. It could come down to net run-rate as to who will join group topper England in the last-four stage.

The focus will be on Sahibzada Farhan, who could break Virat Kohli's record for most runs in a T20 World Cup edition.

The opener has carried his team's batting on his shoulders to amass 283 runs from five innings, and is just 36 away from equalling the Indian maestro's haul from 2014.

Shaheen Afridi made a statement with a four-wicket haul on his return to the starting line-up against England. He is likely to continue as the pace spearhead around a four-pronged spin attack.

SUPER EIGHT

Today's match

Pallekele, 7.00 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: **29**

Sri Lanka **12** | Pakistan **17**

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & JIOHOTSTAR

Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka issued an apology after his team's listless display against New Zealand led to the co-host's elimination. The Lankan fans have showed up in great numbers throughout the tournament and Saturday's contest will be a chance to give them something to cheer about.

The biggest concern has been the side's batting which has succumbed to pressure in both its Super Eight games, especially in the PowerPlay. Against England, it lost five wickets in the first six overs, and could only stack up 20 runs in the same phase against the Kiwis.

Pathum Nissanka has seen a drastic downturn in form, posting just nine and zero in the two high-stakes encounters. The burden falls on the bowlers too. Sri Lanka conceded 70 runs in its last four overs against New Zealand.

IPL 2026 set to begin on March 28, final on May 31

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has revised the dates for the upcoming season.

The 19th edition of the annual franchise T20 extravaganza will now be played from March 28 to May 31.

The Hindu understands that the IPL authorities have informally told multiple stakeholders about the rejig as they hope to begin the season on a weekend.

Not yet official

While the schedule is yet to be officially announced, the 10 franchises, on the eve of the player auction in Abu Dhabi in December, had been informed that IPL 2026 would be hosted between March 26 and May 30.

The detailed schedule is likely to be announced next week.

Election dates

The IPL governing council has delayed the announcement of the schedule since it wants to avoid a clash with the West Bengal, Assam and Tamil Nadu assembly elections.

Need to quickly put the SA loss behind us: Shepherd

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

West Indies all-rounder Romario Shepherd reckoned that the team had to quickly put behind the nine-wicket loss to South Africa ahead of the final Super Eight clash against India.

While the Proteas have qualified for the semifinals, the Caribbean side and Suryakumar Yadav's men will face off in a virtual 'quarterfinal' at the Eden Gardens on Sunday.

Against South Africa, Shepherd scored a fine unbeaten 52 and added 89 for the eighth wicket with Jason Holder to help the Windies recover to 176 for eight from 83 for seven. However, Aiden Markram played a captain's knock and polished off the target in 16.1 overs.

"We don't have much time, actually, to go and sulk. Just to keep a level head and try to recover as fast as possible for that big game. It's a must-win game, so we know our destiny is in our own hands. Hopefully, we can go there and get a win and go through to the semi," said the Guyanese cricketer.

The 31-year-old also felt the team failed to make full use of a good batting surface and agreed that they were short by nearly 50 runs. "Yeah, I think so, because even when the guys were getting out, they were telling us that the wicket is so good. Even when I went out there, the wicket was so good. The first few balls that hit my bat, it just comes on like you're batting on concrete," he added.

Standing tall: Shepherd, in the company of Holder, helped the West Indies stage a good recovery against South Africa. VIJAY SONEJI

At the same time, Shepherd also credited the South African pacers for nailing their slower deliveries and yorkers.

"Lungi with that difficult, slow ball of his. You know, they take the wicket out of the equation. He was beating me in the air more than off the wicket," Shepherd explained about getting beaten repeatedly by Ngidi in the 19th over, in which he managed just five runs off as many balls.

Pakistan must take advantage of Sri Lanka's low morale, poor form

Sunil Gavaskar

The beauty of a T20 World Cup as it nears the end of the Super Eight stage is that virtually every match is a must-win game for the teams.

Pakistan will have looked at Sri Lanka's implosions in batting in their games against England and New Zealand and would want to plan their tactics accordingly.

After England helped Pakistan by defeating New Zealand in a thriller on Friday, the Salman Aghaled team has an outside chance of qualifying for the semifinals.

The Pakistan boys must take advantage of the demoralised state the Lankan boys are in, as can be seen from the media interaction of their captain Dasun Shanaka after the loss to New Zealand.

He asked the government to step in and stop those with cameras outside the stadium, who hadn't even watched the game, to stop spreading negativity about the team.

With their two in-form batters, Pathum Nissanka and Kusal Mendis, failing in both the Super Eight games, there was nobody down the order to play the stabiliser role. Last season's prolific scorer, Kamindu Mendis, has also not been in the best of form. The other aspect where the Lankans were let down was in fielding, where they weren't at their sharpest, and extra runs were gifted away.

Pakistan have depended greatly on Sahibzada Farhan to give momentum to their innings and apart from the game against India, he has consistently done so. If Pakistan are to perform well, he has to score again and get some support from the other end.

Fakhar Zaman's inclusion has certainly helped as he can play the unorthodox shots that are needed in this format of the game. Pakistan will also hope that Shaheen Afridi continues to take a wicket in his first over, preferably that of Nissanka, so that they can restrict the Lankans to a below-par score.

(Professional Management Group)

Lethal: Afridi bowled his heart out against England. AP

Men in Blue fine-tune their team composition ahead of big game

The strategy of three left-handers in the top-order causing a predictable off-spin counter has been tackled effectively by including Samson; southpaws Abhishek and Tilak regaining their mojo will stand the defending champion in good stead

T20 WORLD CUP

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
CHENNAI

In front of the press box, fans were composing ditties and singing with gusto. Their subject of affection were the Indian players ranging from Sanju Samson to Jasprit Bumrah, Suryakumar Yadav to Tilak Varma, and when Arshdeep Singh fielded close to the ropes, he too was serenaded.

Thursday night here at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium was all about joy rippling through the stands as India emphatically defeated Zimbabwe, and kept its semifinal hopes alive in the ICC T20 World Cup. The sporting crowd, a quintessential Chepauk tradition, also cheered Brian Bennett's valiant unbeaten 97 (59b).

India, meanwhile, finetuned its team composition. The strategy of three left-handers atop the batting tree causing a predictable off-spin counter, was dealt with effectively. Right-hander Samson added zest with his 15-ball 24.

However, the opener falling on the pull seems to be a pattern, and if he could rectify that, the defending champion would be better served. Abhishek Sharma too found his voice through a fine 55 off just 30 deliveries and Tilak striding in at No. 6, was at his effervescent best (44 n.o., 16b). And when Hardik Pandya clicks with the bat, it lends a halo to this Indian outfit.

The all-rounder's unbeaten 50 off 23 balls added further momentum as Suryakumar's men enjoyed their stint in the park. But as the championship narrows down to the last stage, better opposition attacks need to be countered, and for the moment, India seems to have locked in its batting order with Hardik being the floater.

On a batting-friendly surface, the Indian bowlers had to be at their best. While most kept their end of the bargain, especially Arshdeep, Shivam Dube suffered the horrors. He may have run into an aggressive Bennett but it only got worse as he sent down two no-balls and a wide.

After the match, Dube had a stint in the nets, working on his lines. The all-rounder has to tighten a bit but as a package, he offers value.

Triumphant World Cup campaigns are all about units finding their cohesive whole closer to the final, India is on it now. More evidence could be gleaned from its vital clash against the West Indies in Kolkata on Sunday.

That there is a tough life beyond sport also became obvious as Rinku Singh had to grapple with the news of his father's demise.

In the 1999 OD1 World Cup in England, Sachin Tendulkar dealt with a similar fate. Life, the regular and the sporting, just goes on.

Getting it right: India seems to have locked its batting order by having Hardik as the floater. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Bowlers are more than happy to do the dirty job: Arshdeep

Sankar Narayanan E.H.
CHENNAI

Arshdeep Singh is candid by nature and funny by default. It was no surprise, then, that a throng of sports scribes swarmed the left-arm pacer, thrusting recording devices forward, as he walked into the mixed zone at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on Thursday night.

"I thought you guys were going to beat me up," Arshdeep quipped, setting the ball rolling.

The 27-year-old understands that T20s are tough on bowlers.

"I try to keep things simple. Some days are good and some days are not, and I make peace with it," he said after India's 72-run win over Zimbabwe.

Asked if he was trying to improve anything specific, he added: "[I'm] trying to control the urge to bowl bad balls. Yes, mainly that."

Breaks Bumrah's record

Arshdeep's three for 24 against Zimbabwe made him the Men in Blue's leading wicket-taker (35 scalps) in T20 World Cup history, surpassing Jasprit Bumrah (33).

"Even if we go for runs, it's not a problem. Our gameplan has been like this for the last two years. We score a lot and try to defend it.

"So as long as we keep getting pitches on which our batters can play freely, we [bowlers] are more than happy to do the dirty job."

The Punjab bowler thanked South Africa for beating West Indies, a result that eased some pressure on India's title defence.

"My family was in the room when the West Indies batters were hitting, papa gaali dete the ki kya kar raha hai (father was abusing what are they doing). So I was like, 'it's okay, don't be angry and just enjoy the match and hope South Africa wins, and we also win our remaining matches.' Thank you South Africa for giving us the chance to decide our result... now we will try to not lose," he said.

> [I'm] trying to control the urge to bowl bad balls

Excellent record: Arshdeep has become the Men in Blue's leading wicket-taker in T20 World Cup history. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Voll, Litchfield fire Australia to ODI series victory over India

INDIA IN AUSTRALIA

Press Trust of India
HOBART

Georgia Voll (101) made the most of three lifelines while Phoebe Litchfield hit a belligerent 80 to power Australia to a five-wicket win and an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match women's ODI series against reigning world champion India here on Friday.

After India posted 251 for nine on a batting-friendly deck following fifties from Pratika Rawal (52) and Harmanpreet Kaur (54), Australia romped home with 13.5 overs to spare.

Voll completed her second ODI hundred after a dropped catch down the leg by wicketkeeper Richa Ghosh allowed her to scamper for a single. She was dropped twice earlier. Voll added 119 for the second wicket with Litchfield.

The 22-year-old was on 19 when Kranti Gaud failed to hold on to a tough chance diving to her front at long on, off Deepti Sharma in the 14th over. Later on, a regulation chance at deep mid-wicket was spilled by Smriti Mandhana off Kashvee Gautam.

With one ODI (two points) and a one-off Test (four points) left to be played, Australia now leads the all-format series 6-4.

Earlier, Pratika and skipper Harmanpreet struck half-centuries to help India cross 250. Pratika's knock, off 81 balls with six fours, was instrumental in giving India a strong start but Harmanpreet's 70-ball innings was even more crucial after a stutter in the middle overs.

Pratika provided a strong start with a 78-run partnership with Smriti (31).

However, some ordinary shot selection landed the Indians in trouble for the second consecutive time in the series.

Smriti missed a paddle sweep off Ashleigh Gardner to be bowled, while Jemimah Rodrigues played a loose shot outside off to be caught behind off Annabel Sutherland.

Deepti Sharma was caught at deep mid-wicket off Alana King, who also pinned the dangerous Richa Ghosh leg-before for 22. Kashvee (25) put on a 55-run stand for the seventh wicket with Harmanpreet, which took India past the 200-run mark.

The third ODI will be played at the same venue on Sunday.

The scores:
India 251/9 in 50 overs (Pratika 52, Smriti 31, Harmanpreet 54, Kashvee 25, Gardner 2/39, Sutherland 2/37, King 2/41) lost to Australia 252/5 in 36.1 overs (Litchfield 80, Voll 101, Mooney 31, Kashvee 2/47, Deepti 2/32).
Toss: India.
PoM: Voll.

Going great guns: Voll's second ODI hundred set up Australia's emphatic win. X@CRICKETCOMAU

It's Real vs. City yet again; PSG gets Chelsea

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Real Madrid and Manchester City will face off in a Champions League knockout tie for the fifth season running after being drawn Friday to play each other in the last 16, while reigning champion Paris Saint-Germain will take on Chelsea. The Spanish giant, record 15-time European champion, will host City in the first leg next month before travelling for the return the following week.

The clubs have already played each other this season, with Pep Guardiola's City winning 2-1 in Madrid in December during the league phase. This is the eighth season in which the teams have played each other since 2012.

PSG will be at home to Chelsea in the first leg. The sides played each other in the knockout stages in three consecutive years from 2014 to 2016, with Chelsea winning the first of those confrontations in the quarterfinals and PSG triumphing in the last 16 in the following two.

Their last encounter came in July's Club World Cup final in the United States, when Chelsea won 3-0.

Newcastle United will take on Barcelona with the first leg at St. James' Park.

Liverpool will have a rematch against Galatasaray, the Turkish giants having defeated the Anfield club in September in the league phase. Arsenal will come up against Bayer Leverkusen and Tottenham Hotspur was drawn to play Atletico Madrid. Bayern Munich will play Atalanta, the sole Italian club left in the competition.

The pre-quarterfinal line-up:
Real Madrid vs. Manchester City; Bodo/Glimt vs. Sporting; PSG vs. Chelsea, Newcastle vs. Barcelona; Galatasaray vs. Liverpool; Atletico Madrid vs. Tottenham Hotspur.
Atalanta vs. Bayern Munich; Bayer Leverkusen vs. Arsenal.
First leg on March 10/11; second leg March 17/18.

Blockbuster clashes: The Champions League match-ups displayed on a screen at the draw ceremony. AFP

Gukesh, Yakubboev split points; Aravindh gets past Niemann

CHESS

Press Trust of India
PRAGUE

D. Gukesh played out another draw with Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan, while defending champion Aravindh Chithambaram pulled a rabbit out of the hat to defeat Hans Moke Niemann of the USA in the Masters section second round of the Prague International Chess Festival here.

Following a draw with Niemann, Gukesh's second white game also did not yield much as Yakubboev seemed well-armed in the Queen's gambit declined. After a couple of trades, the position looked level and Yakubboev uncorked a rook sacrifice to force a repetition of position.

Aravindh continued with his newfound preference for the Philidor Defence, while Niemann seized the early initiative with white. The American, however, ran short of time at a critical juncture and paid heavily, just when the analytical engines were evaluating his position as winning.

Aravindh was quick to capitalise on his chances and soon transitioned into a winning endgame. After a heartbreaking first-round loss to Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan, this was a welcome victory for the Chennai-based player.

With seven rounds still to come, Abdusattorov, Yakubboev and local hopeful David Navara emerged the co-leaders on 1.5 points apiece and the trio is followed by Gukesh, Aravindh, van Foreest and Guijarro half-a-point behind.

In the challengers section, Grandmaster Divya Deshmukh played out a draw with Daniil Yuffa of Spain to remain on a 50% score after two games.

Important second round results: D. Gukesh (Ind, 1) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 1.5); Hans Moke Niemann (USA, 0.5) lost to Aravindh Chithambaram (Ind, 1); Parham Maghsoodloo (Iri, 0.5) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 1.5); Vincent Keymer (Ger, 0.5) drew with David Navara (Cze, 1.5).

Challengers: Gledura Benjamin (Hun, 0.5) lost to Thomas Beerdsen (Ned, 2); Jonas Buhl Bjerre (Den, 1) drew with Surya Shekhar Ganguly (Ind, 0.5); Stpen Hrbek (Cze, 2) bt Jiner Zhu (Chn, 0); Divya Deshmukh (Ind, 1) drew with Daniil Yuffa (Esp, 0.5).

Good outing: Aravindh capitalised on his chances against Niemann to emerge the winner. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: Star Sports Khel & JioHotstar, 9.30 a.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 & 7.30 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 6, 8.30 & 11 p.m.
LaLiga: FanCode, 6.30, 8.45, 11 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Sunday)
Men's T20 World Cup: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7 p.m.
Serie A: DAZN, 7.30, 10.30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Sunday)
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 8 & 11 p.m.

Not batting well in the last two games cost India, says skipper Harmanpreet

Press Trust of India
HOBART

The Indian women's team captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Friday conceded that poor batting in the first two ODIs against Australia led to consecutive defeats in the first 50-over assignment since becoming World champions last November.

India made a bright start to pip Australia 2-1 in the T20Is but lost the first two ODIs with one match left to be played on Sunday.

The two teams, engaged in an all-format series to be decided over points, will also play a one-off Test.

"We didn't bat well today because as a group we decided to bat first and put a 300-plus total on the board because today's pitch was far better than the previous one," Harmanpreet said.

"Unfortunately, we again made the same mistakes and kept losing wickets in between. That's why we were short of runs.

" No matter whether we bat first or second, we have to bat really well because whenever we bat well, we're always in a good situation. It's only about batting well and batting deep, and hopefully in the next game we'll do that," she added.

Australia skipper Alyssa Healy, who will play her final match on Sunday, said she was "pumped up" with an ODI win over India.

Ecstatic

"I'm really pumped up with that result. I was ecstatic with the way we went about that chase and to do it again tonight even better, I thought, was outstanding. Pretty pleased with that," Healy said.

VIT CHENNAI

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Special Guest

Abhishek Manu Singhvi
Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India, MP, Rajya Sabha

Presided by

G Viswanathan
Founder & Chancellor, Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT)

Programme Schedule

11:00 AM Onwards
INAUGURATION

11:45 AM – 11:50 AM
Welcome Address by
Suresh Nambath, Editor, The Hindu

11:50 AM – 12:15 PM
Presiding Address by **G Viswanathan,**
Founder & Chancellor, Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT)

12:20 PM – 12:45 PM
Special Address by **Abhishek Manu Singhvi,**
Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India,
MP, Rajya Sabha

12:50 PM – 1:15 PM
Legal Education in India

G V Selvam, Vice-President,
Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT)
in conversation with **L V Navaneeth,**
CEO, The Hindu Group

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM
LUNCH

2:00 PM – 2:45 PM
Gen AI–Induced Technological Transformation: Professional Competence in Legal Practice

Vishal Sinha, Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Neha Rathi, Advocate-on-Record, Supreme Court of India
Jishnu J R, Head of the Department, B.B.A. LL.B (Hons), VITSOL, VIT Chennai
Sandeep Phukan, Associate Editor,
The Hindu (Moderator)

2:50 PM – 3:35 PM
Fundamental Rights in the Digital Age: The Constitution's Response to Emerging Trends

Shadan Farasat, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Gopal Sankaranarayanan, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India
M S Sharmila, Head of the Department, Centre for Post Graduate Legal Studies (LL.M Programme), VITSOL, VIT Chennai
Aaratrika Bhaumik, Senior Sub Editor, Digital, The Hindu (Moderator)

3:40 PM – 4:10 PM
The Art of Constitutional Thinking: How Great Lawyers Are Made

S Muralidhar, Senior Advocate and Former Chief Justice, High Court of Orissa
in conversation with **Krishnadas Rajagopal,**
Legal Correspondent, The Hindu

4:15 PM – 4:30 PM
BREAK

4:35 PM – 5:20 PM
Improving Legal Access: Making Justice Accessible to All

Shreya Arora Mehta, District & Additional Sessions Judge, Delhi
Sanchita Ain, Advocate-on-Record, Supreme Court of India
Karuna Nundy, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Tania Sebastian, Head of the Department, B.A. LL.B (Hons), VITSOL, VIT Chennai
Kunal Shankar, Deputy Business Editor,
The Hindu (Moderator)

5:25 PM – 6:00 PM
Constitutional Morality and the Supreme Court of India: Has the Court Moved from Constitutionalism to Pragmatism?

Kapil Sibal, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India,
MP, Rajya Sabha
in conversation with **N Ram,** Director, The Hindu Group

6:05 PM – 6:10 PM
Vote of Thanks
Rabbiraj C, Professor of Law, Dean, VITSOL, VIT Chennai

*Schedule subject to changes

Five-star Nabi, dashing Qamran flatten Karnataka

The pacer's two blows hasten the end of the hosts' innings despite Mayank's defiant century while the opener comes to the visitors' rescue and puts them on the brink of a historic triumph

RANJI TROPHY FINAL

N. Sudarshan
HUBBALLI

Sport is replete with examples where the most well-thought-out of plans and best-informed of decisions have come a cropper.

But Jammu & Kashmir, for a fourth straight day, displayed clockwork precision to ensure that its march towards cricketing history would remain unaltered.

On the penultimate day of the 2025-26 Ranji Trophy final at the KSCA Rajnagar Stadium here, Auqib Nabi secured his fourth five-wicket haul in five innings (five for 54) and became the season's highest wicket-taker (60) as Karnataka folded for 293 and conceded a massive 291-run first-innings lead.

Then, the away batters – led by the delightfully unorthodox Qamran Iqbal (94 batting, 160b, 11x4, 1x6), who enlivened proceedings not just through his shot-making but also via the banter he indulged in with Karnataka speedster V. Vyshak – battled their way to 186 for four to swell the advantage to 477 runs.

Heady stuff: Nabi is the toast of his teammates after another heroic effort while Qamran's knock enabled J & K tighten its grip on the final. K. MURALI KUMAR

With just Saturday left, it is only a matter of time before J & K ascends the Indian domestic game's pulpit for the first time ever.

The host took the field on Friday hoping for overnight batters Kruthik Krishna and Mayank Agarwal to bat as long as they can.

But the former's dismissal in the ninth over of the morning for 36 (101b, 2x4) pegged the side back. The on-field umpire adjudged Kruthik leg-before but the southpaw challenged it. A 10-minute-long review ensued, where it had to first be adjudicated if there was bat on ball.

With the third umpire deeming that there was no conclusive evidence to prove that, the on-field call stood, laying bare the fact that despite all the technological support and attempts to make things black and white, cricket still has a lot of grey.

Mayank soldiered on, bringing up his 150 with an edged boundary after substitute wicket-keeper Dikshant Kundal grassed a catch. But when Nabi removed him for 160 (266b, 21x4) and Shikhar Shetty for a duck – both leg-before and both on review – Karnataka was boxed into a corner.

It tried to jailbreak by sending back J & K's first-essay performers Yawer Hassan and Shubham Pundir with just 11 on the board. The former chopped on a Prasidh Krishna delivery and the latter was caught down the leg-side off Vyshak.

> He has been playing like this since childhood. Bowlers will feel like he is gone, but he will make 100 runs like this
>
> **SAHIL LOTRA**
> on Qamran Iqbal

Then, with the team score on 32, Qamran was beaten all ends up by Vidyadhar Patil only for the bails to not fall despite the ball brushing against the stumps.

Devdutt Padikkal & Co. were suddenly a chirpy lot, and perhaps sensed an ever-so-slight opening.

Skipper Paras Dogra, however, shut them down with a dogged 83-minute stay (16, 59b) before Qamran and Abdul Samad (32, 70b, 4x4, 1x6) combined for 73 runs to all but crush Karnataka's chances.

CM Abdullah to watch

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is scheduled to watch the final day's play. J & K is on the cusp of a historic maiden Ranji triumph.

The scores:
Jammu & Kashmir — 1st innings: 584.
Karnataka — 1st innings: K.L. Rahul c Wadhawan b Nabi 13, Mayank Agarwal lbw b Nabi 160, Devdutt Padikkal c Samad b Sunil 11, Karun Nair b Nabi 0, R. Smaran c Wadhawan b Nabi 0; Shreyas Gopal lbw b Yudhvir 27, Kruthik Krishna lbw b Lotra 36, Vidyadhar Patil c sub (Kundal) b Sunil 11, V. Vyshak (not out) 17, Shikhar Shetty lbw b Nabi 0, Prasidh Krishna c Sunil b Yudhvir 4; Extras (lb-3, nb-11): 14; Total (in 93.3 overs): 293.
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-56, 3-57, 4-57, 5-162, 6-241, 7-256, 8-278, 9-288.
Jammu & Kashmir bowling: Nabi 23-7-54-5, Sunil 19-6-51-2, Yudhvir 14.3-3-55-2, Abid 23-2-75-0, Lotra 12-1-50-1, Samad 2-0-5-0.
Jammu & Kashmir — 2nd innings: Qamran Iqbal (batting) 94, Yawer Hassan b Prasidh 1, Shubham Pundir c sub (Shrijith) b Vyshak 4; Paras Dogra b Prasidh 16, Abdul Samad c Vyshak b Shreyas 32, Sahil Lotra (batting) 16; Extras (b-17, lb-4, w-2): 23; Total (for four wkts. in 57 overs): 186.
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-11, 3-72, 4-145.
Karnataka bowling: Vyshak 10-1-30-1, Prasidh 12-0-42-2, Vidyadhar 9-0-39-0, Shikhar 10-3-27-0, Shreyas 16-6-27-1.

A bittersweet ton for Mayank

N. Sudarshan
HUBBALLI

After losing his captaincy in the aftermath of Karnataka's crushing 217-run loss to Madhya Pradesh in January, Mayank Agarwal would have been a dispirited man.

But the selectors' ploy of liberating him from the burden of captaincy and allowing him to focus on his batting seems to have worked.

From the season's first nine innings, the 35-year-old made just 298 runs. But in the seven since then, he has totalled 380, including scores of 46, 53, 92 and Friday's 160.

"To get a hundred in the final is satisfying," Mayank told reporters.

"I have been working hard on my game and I've got a few starts in the season but haven't had as many runs as I would have liked. So just the way I batted felt good."

A century in a Ranji Trophy final is indeed a special achievement, but for Mayank, it is likely to be bittersweet. Jammu & Kashmir – having already secured the first-innings advantage – leads by 477 runs with a day's play remaining.

The visitors still have six wickets left, which means a Karnataka victory is nigh impossible. "We know we are behind. But we are going to come out in the morning, give our best and see what happens."

A big reason why the hosts are on the back foot is pacer Auqib Nabi, whose five-wicket haul included the wickets of K.L. Rahul, Karun Nair, R. Smaran and Mayank.

All praise for Nabi

"He deserves all the credit and the wickets column shows that," Mayank said of Nabi. "The good thing he's done is to challenge both edges of the bat, and bowled very, very tight lines. That keeps you under pressure".

Effiong's brace powers Punjab FC past Bengaluru FC

ISL

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

The towering Nsungusi Effiong proved too hot to handle for Bengaluru FC (BFC). The tall striker, blessed with both strength and speed, scored a brace to give Punjab FC a 2-0 win over BFC in an ISL encounter at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Friday.

The visitor recorded its maiden win in two matches, while BFC suffered its first defeat in three games.

Effiong ran riot in the first half, bullying defenders Nikhil Poojari and K. Chinglensana into submission. The BFC wall cracked in the 20th minute, when Effiong climbed over his marker to meet a cross from Manglenthang Kipgen.

Effiong's strong header beat BFC goalkeeper Gurpreet Sandhu at the near post.

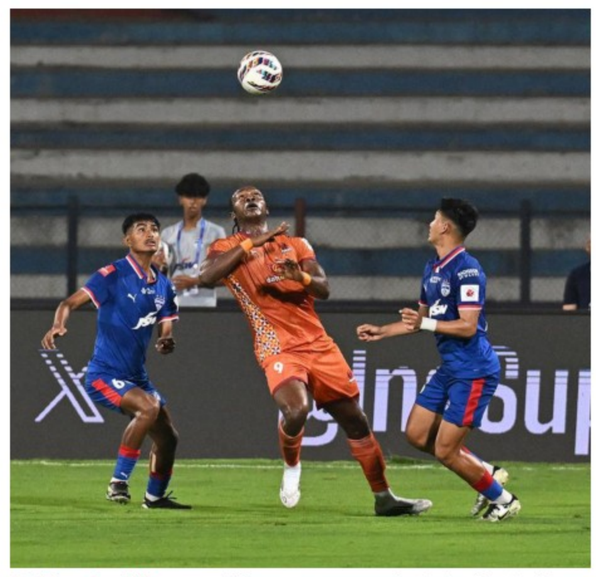
The Nigerian doubled the lead with a composed finish in the 32nd. After being dispossessed in midfield, BFC was slow to get back in defence. Dani Ramirez found Effiong with a neat pass, who produced a left-footed strike from the edge of the box which rocketed past Sandhu.

A desperate BFC, physically and tactically outplayed, brought Sunil Chhetri, Sirojiddin and Haobam Meetei on in the second half.

The changes made the home team more cohesive, and enabled it keep possession for longer periods.

The crowd gasped in shock in the 59th when Chhetri squandered the easiest of chances in front of an open goal. That was the closest BFC came to getting on the scoresheet.

The results:
Bengaluru FC 0 lost to Punjab FC 2 (Nsungusi Effiong 20, 32).
At Kolkata: East Bengal FC 1 (Edmund Larindika 41) lost to Jamshedpur FC 2 (Stephen Eze 61, Rei Tachikawa 87).



Making the difference: Effiong, centre, ran riot in the first half. ALLEN EGENUSE J.